Cory still wants mastermind of Ninoy's assassination

Story on PAGE A2

PCGG wants to see Imelda put in jail

By Dona Pazzibugan

PUT Imelda in jail.

Now that the Supreme Court has ruled on the Marcos Swiss deposits in favor of the government, the Presidential Commission on Good Government said yesterday its next step was clear: to see former first lady Imelda Marcos in jail, for

PCGG/A16

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Meralco, Napocor sign P20-B settlement** BUSINESS/B1
- **Ombudsman wants Jinggoy back in jail** NEWS /A2
- **7 die in Bataan clash** ACROSS/A10

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Solons rush changes in land reform law

Amendments to allot money for human rights victims

By Cynthia Balana, Volt Contreras and Dona Pazzibugan

LEADERS of the House of Representatives yesterday moved to allot a portion of the P36 billion in Marcos money that the Supreme Court forfeited in favor of the government to compensate victims of human rights abuses.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. has directed the House committees on agrarian reform and human rights to coordinate in amending the law providing that all ill-gotten wealth recovered from the Marcoses and their cronies be used to finance the government's land reform program.

"In the next 30 days, we should be able to provide legislation to finance the compensation for the thousands of human rights victims during martial law," he said.

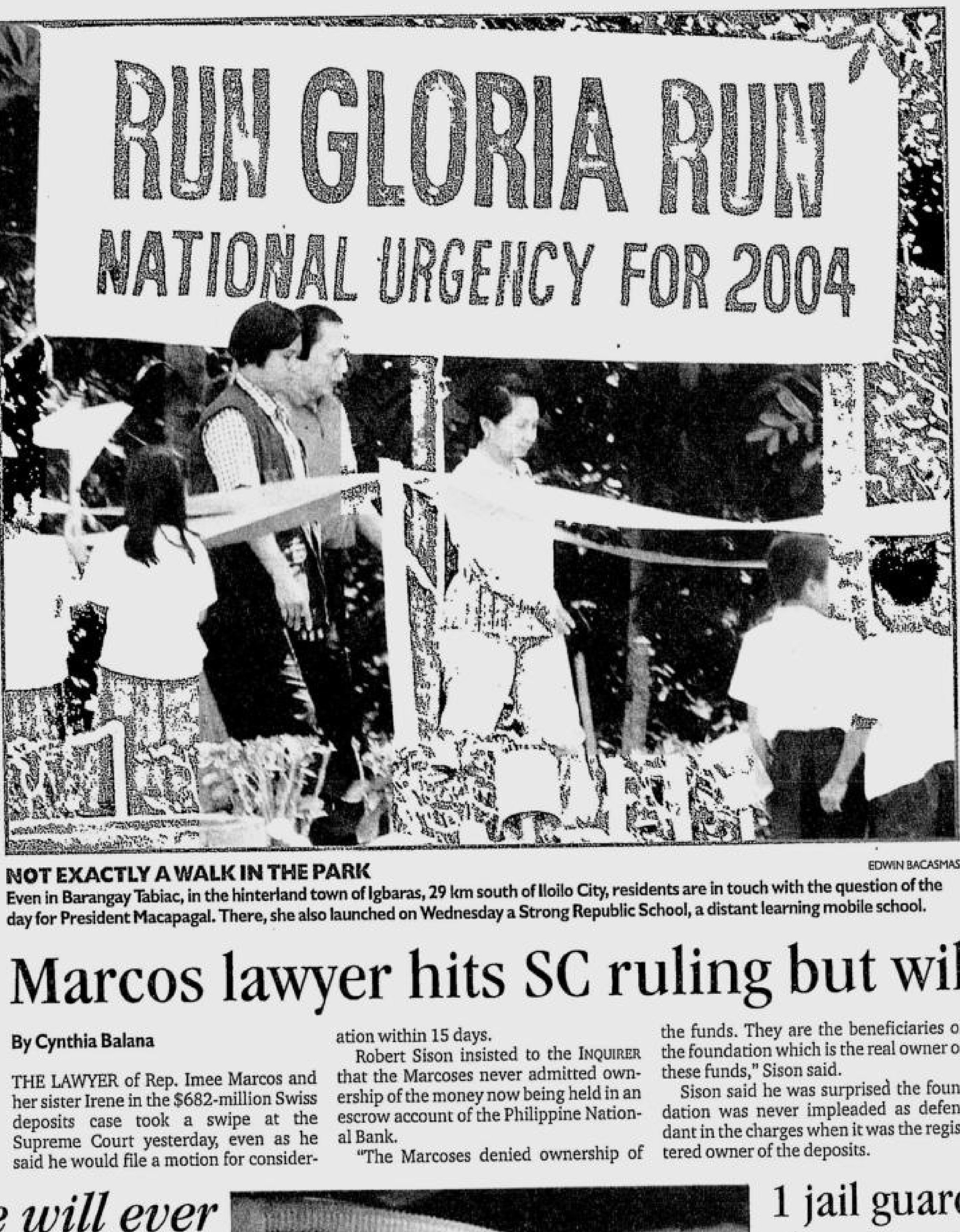
House Bill No. 4535, authored by former anti-Marcos activists led by Representatives Loretta Ann Rosales, Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran, Liza Masa, and 12 others, seeks to amend the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) of 1988 and to earmark about P10 billion for martial law victims.

Senate Bill No. 1877, authored by Sen. Joker Arroyo, a human rights lawyer during the dictatorship, also seeks to amend CARL.

De Venecia asked Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales, Senior Assistant Majority Leader Francis Escudero and the 16 regional party whips to ensure the immediate passage of the measure.

The Speaker said he would consult with Rep. Rolando Andaya, chair of the House appropriations committee, on the possibility of including the fund allotment for the rights victims in the proposed 2004 Gener-

SOLONS/A16



EDWIN BACASMAS

NOT EXACTLY A WALK IN THE PARK
Even in Barangay Tabiac, in the hinterland town of Igbaras, 29 km south of Iloilo City, residents are in touch with the question of the day for President Macapagal. There, she also launched on Wednesday a Strong Republic School, a distant learning mobile school.

DAR to use ₱36B to buy 3M hectares of land for 2M farmers

By Norman Bordadora

THE DISTRIBUTION of more than 3 million hectares of agricultural land to almost 2 million landless farmers may be completed soon following the Supreme Court decision to award P36 billion in Marcos ill-gotten wealth to the government, Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan said yesterday.

Pagdanganan said the Department of Agrarian Reform would no longer be hampered by the government's huge budget deficit in implementing the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program as soon as the Supreme Court decision became final and executory.

Under Republic Act No. 6657, all ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and their cronies that the Presidential Commission on Good Government recovers shall go to the land reform program.

"It will just be a matter of time before we can realize the full implementation of the agrarian reform program. We just have to wait until the high court's decision becomes final and executory," he said.

Congress slashed the budget of DAR to only P560 million although it requested P3.8 billion. The huge budget cut severely hampered the acquisition and distribution of land covered by the land reform program.

The government seeks to complete the acquisition and distribution of 3.1 million hectares of agricultural land to farmer-beneficiaries in 2004. Some 1.8 million landless farmers are expected to benefit from the program.

Some agrarian reform organizations are open to the idea of sharing the recovered P36 billion Marcos loot with human rights claimants, but the militant peasant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas wants the Marcos victims to get all the money.

"It would be an injustice to Marcos'

DAR/A16

Marcos lawyer hits SC ruling but will file appeal

By Cynthia Balana

THE LAWYER of Rep. Imee Marcos and her sister Irene in the $682-million Swiss deposits case took a swipe at the Supreme Court yesterday, even as he said he would file a motion for consideration within 15 days.

Robert Sison insisted to the INQUIRER that the Marcoses never admitted ownership of the money now being held in an escrow account of the Philippine National Bank.

"The Marcoses denied ownership of the funds. They are the beneficiaries of the foundation which is the real owner of these funds," Sison said.

Sison said he was surprised the foundation was never impleaded as defendant in the charges when it was the registered owner of the deposits.

Sison said he would question the whole decision altogether, as well as the issue of the Supreme Court having tried the case on its merits and resolved the factual issue at hand.

"The Supreme Court only tries ques-

MARCOS/A16

'I hope no one will ever be turned away again'

By Edson Tandoc Jr., Leila B. Salaverria and Jerome Aning

TOO poor to give each of her quadruplets a chance to live, Jocelyn Calisaan can only cry and pray. ERIK ARAZAS

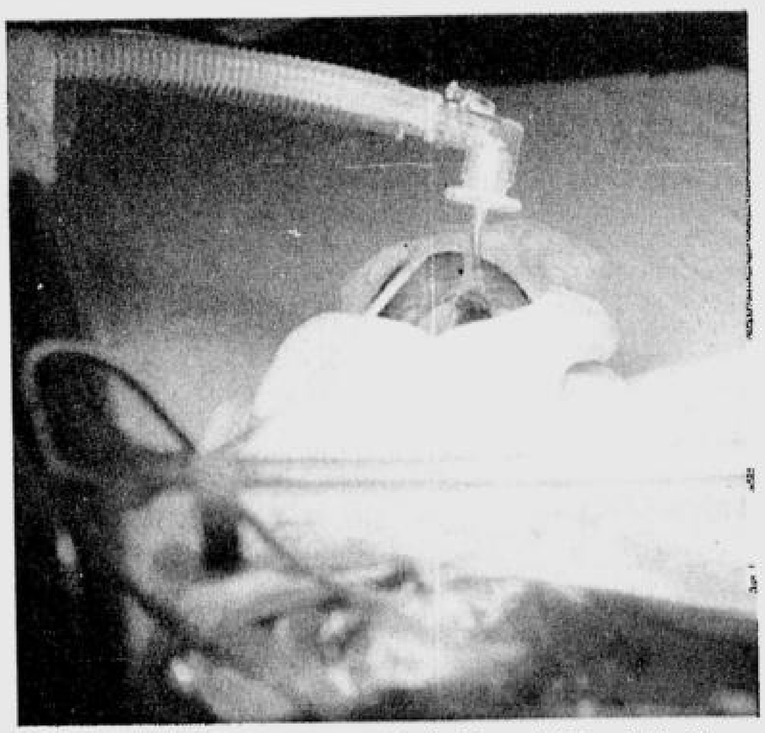
TEARS fell from Jocelyn Calisaan's eyes as she looked on her 28-week-old daughter yesterday, the only one who survived of the four baby girls she had given birth to on Tuesday.

Her surviving daughter, Maria Jhobelle, was inside an incubator at the Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital.

Jocelyn said she had already accepted God's will—but at the same time said her daughters could have survived had the Manila Central University Hospital given them immediate attention.

Vladimir, the quadruplets' father, said he wanted to forget about his anger at MCU Hospital who turned him and his babies away.

I HOPE/A4



FIGHTING for her life at the Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital in Sta. Cruz, Manila, the lone surviving quadruplet is in an incubator provided by the National Children's Hospital. ERIK ARAZAS

1 jail guard sleeping, 2nd out shopping

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE jail guard was asleep; another was out shopping.

Red-faced police officials yesterday admitted these lapses in Camp Crame's high-security detention center during the escape of Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, Abdulmukin Ong Edris and Omar Opik Lasal.

Al-Ghozi, a convicted Indonesian bomber and the most senior Jemaah Islamiya operative in custody in Southeast Asia, had befriended his guards, which enabled him and the two suspected Abu Sayyaf kidnappers to bolt jail, Director Eduardo Matillano

1 JAIL/A4

NAKOW! WALA ANG F4 DOON!

Con men selling lots in 'Meteor Garden'

By Alcuin Papa

SORRY, Dao Ming Si doesn't live here.

A fake real estate company is riding on the popularity of the Taiwanese television soap opera "Meteor Garden" by offering nonexistent lots in Cavite, Quezon City and Taguig supposedly called Meteor Gardens.

The Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) received

CON MEN/A4

GMA forms independent body to probe escape

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EXPRESSING regret over the jailbreak of a top Jemaah Islamia bomb maker, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the creation of an independent fact-finding commission that would determine how Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi escaped from Camp Crame, along with two other Abu Sayyaf bandits.

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. earlier created Task Force Pugante that would investigate how the fugitives escaped and track them down.

Asked if the creation of an independent commission meant that the President had lost confidence in Ebdane, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye replied: "The President feels that this is an incident imbued with vital national interest. That's why she's taking an extraordinary move of creating an independent fact-finding body. We don't want to get into the alleged politics (within the PNP)."

The commission, "whose members shall be persons of unquestionable integrity and probity," would find out whether there was

GMA FORMS/A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas will experience rains with occasional gusty winds and the coastal waters over these areas will be moderate to rough. Southern Luzon, the rest of Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/07/17/03

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Cory still wants 'brains' behind Ninoy's killing

Talk now, convicted soldiers urged

FORMER President Corazon Aquino yesterday asked soldiers convicted of killing her husband nearly 20 years ago to reveal who ordered the assassination that sparked the "people power" revolt against dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

AQUINO

The identity of the mastermind behind the Aug. 21, 1983 killing of opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. has remained a mystery. Mrs. Aquino suggested that she would not forgive the foot soldiers convicted of the killing until they tell the truth.

The killing of Benigno Aquino, fondly known as "Ninoy," set off massive public outrage and protests that culminated in the 1986 army-backed revolution that toppled Marcos and swept Ms Aquino to power.

The bloodless revolt by millions was hailed as a harbinger of democratic change in authoritarian regimes worldwide. It inspired a similar military-backed, peaceful uprising two years ago that ousted President Joseph Estrada amid allegations of massive corruption that he has denied.

"I pray for them that they will finally tell us the truth," Ms Aquino told reporters after delivering a speech before businessmen on her plans for the 20-year anniversary of her husband's killing.

Twenty-six soldiers were acquitted of Aquino's murder during a trial under Marcos.

After Ms Aquino took office, the Supreme Court ordered a new trial which lasted three years and ended with the conviction of 16 soldiers for the murder of Aquino and an alleged communist hit man, Rolando Galman, whom the Marcos' government blamed for the killing.

Slain at the tarmac

Aquino was getting off a plane with military escorts at the Manila International Airport when he was shot while going down the stairs to the tarmac. He had returned from a long US exile to help the opposition fight Marcos, who was then seriously ill. The airport now bears his name.

The trials failed to determine whether Marcos or his associates ordered the assassinations. Marcos died in exile in Honolulu in 1989.

Amid the country's political and economic ills, Mrs. Aquino said she would mark the anniversary of her husband's killing next month by launching a "people power" movement that would espouse democratic ideals and harness volunteers and donations to help the poor.

Although still regarded as politically influential, Aquino said that at age 70, she is in the "pre-departure lounge," and has decided to stay away from politics. She had said she would not endorse any candidate in next year's presidential election.

She said she would focus on helping non-government organizations although she would still campaign for her son, Benigno Aquino III, when he runs for re-election in Congress.

"I, for one, have resolved to set aside politics to concentrate on this path that I have chosen," she said.

"I will not ask for your vote. I will not endorse anyone for president," she said, explaining that this would free her from suspicions that her civic work was just a disguise for political campaigning.

She recalled that in recent months, when she met with the poor, people always questioned her motives, asking if she was campaigning for someone or running herself.

Departure lounge

"This to me, is confirmation that our people are deeply suspicious of politicians whom they know only to be interested in them come election time," she said.

Asked if she would tell the populace not to vote for certain "undesirable candidates", Aquino said "it's high time the people think these things out for themselves."

She joked, "my days of making a difference (in politics) are over. I'm 70 years old and my friends told me, we're in the pre-departure lounge already."

She recalled that she only reluctantly went into politics to unify the opposition forces using her position as the widow of a martyr.

She weathered seven coup attempts and ended her term in 1992, still enjoying a reputation for honesty and steadfastness. Her endorsement was instrumental in getting her defense secretary, Fidel Ramos, elected as her successor in 1992.

Aquino bewailed the fact that despite the restoration of democracy, people had become cynical with many resorting to selling their votes on election time.

"Our people are tired of empty promises and ad hoc solutions to their problems," she said.

She credited President Macapagal for trying "to move us forward" but said internal and external problems were still hampering the country. *AP, AFP*

TERRORIST HUNTER

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matellano, chief of criminal investigation, answers questions during a press conference on the escape of terror suspect Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi. The jailers of the Indonesian suspect, who escaped from his Camp Crame jail on Monday, have been charged with infidelity in the custody of prisoners. JOAN BONDOC

Barbers son chides pa's colleagues for Cha-cha vote

By Carlito Pablo

THROWING inter-chamber courtesy out the window, congressional representatives yesterday lashed out at their Senate colleagues who voted against a House resolution proposing that Congress form itself into a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution.

The eight senators who opted for a constitutional convention instead of a constituent assembly were "fence-sitting politicians, old political guards ... now at the twilight of their political careers," said Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers.

The Lakas congressman is the son of administration Sen. Robert Barbers, one of only two senators who endorsed the constitutional assembly mode, the other one being Sen. Edgardo Angara.

Angara is the chair of the committee on constitutional amendments whose members voted 8-3-2 last Monday for the constitutional convention mode.

"With the Senate vote ... we will never be able to make it because apparently the people entrusted the national interest in the callous hands of upstart and glory-seeking politicians," said the young Barbers.

He said the eight senators "missed their rendezvous with destiny."

"At no point in our recent history are political reforms more imperative," Barbers said.

The country does not deserve leaders who are "mere publicity hounds and fence-sitting politicians," he said.

Calling a constitutional convention would mean that Charter change will occur only after the 2004 elections, said Cagayan de Oro Rep. Constantino Jaraula.

He said the voting outcome in the Senate only confirmed that certain senators were "unwilling to give up their presidential and vice presidential ambitions."

"The interest of the country is not being served by such an attitude," he said.

The eight who voted to call a constitutional convention were Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda, Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, and Senators Teresa Aquino Oreta, Francisco Pangilinan, Ramon Revilla, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., John Osmeña and Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Three others voted to hold a referendum to allow the people to decide on what mode to adopt: Senators Manuel Villar, Rodolfo Biazon and Vicente Sotto III.

Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano said the constituent assembly was not yet dead and congressmen would not give up the fight for it as they want the shift to a parliamentary system to be in effect before the elections next year. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan*

RP-born priest held on sex raps in California

By Recah Trinidad

FOOTHILL RANCH, California—The Catholic community here woke up yesterday to a shock report about a Philippine-born priest who was arrested Monday after a 15-year-old girl told police he had molested her.

The Orange County Register, which bannered the story in its local news section, named the priest as Rev. Gerardo Jarencio Tanilong, 71, assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe-Delhi, "a largely Spanish-speaking congregation in the Delhi neighborhood of Santa Ana."

He was being held on $50,000 bail at the Orange County Jail, the Register reported.

He was booked on suspicion of child molestation after Anaheim police interviewed him Monday morning, the news report said.

Officials at the diocese said Tanilong, who has served for 17 years in the Diocese of Orange, was placed on administrative leave.

If found guilty of sexual misconduct, Tanilong would be permanently removed from the ministry, the diocese said.

According to the Register, the unidentified teen and her parents went to church officials Sunday and reported that the girl had been molested the night before. Church officials brought the teen and her parents to the Anaheim Police Department the same day to report the allegations. Tanilong came to the police station Monday morning, was interviewed, booked and taken to jail on suspicion of lewd conduct with a minor.

As traced by the Register: Tanilong, born in the Philippines, was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1962; served at Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Boniface (all parishes in Orange County); recently served at St. Callistus in Garden Groove before being reassigned to the Delhi neighborhood in July 1999.

The Diocese of Orange declared in March that its clergy roster was free of molester priests, the Register said.

Extradition of tax scam suspect sought

By Clarissa Batino

THE SPECIAL presidential task force investigating the so-called tax credit scam has asked the justice department to work on the extradition of Gloria Eng Eng C. Chingkoe who, with husband Faustino, is accused of defrauding the government of some P2.5 billion in tax revenues.

Chingkoe, who is believed to be hiding in Canada, is wanted for 83 cases of violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act as well as falsification of public documents, according to lawyer Alan Ventura of Task Force 156.

All the other respondents in the case involving 12 Chingkoe companies believed to have participated in the scam have been arrested and have posted bail.

The scam, which defrauded the government of some P5.3 billion in tax revenues, involves the fraudulent issuance of tax credit certificates. Some believe the amount may have reached P20 billion.

Some unscrupulous companies allegedly submitted spurious documents to claim the tax credits, a form of tax incentive enjoyed by exporters, particularly garment companies.

Of the P5.3 billion, P2.5 billion in tax credit certificates were cornered by the 12 companies of the Chingkoe group.

"The extradition case against Mrs. Chingkoe is just one of the many efforts of the task force in fully implementing its mandate to help fight graft and corruption," said Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho who chairs the executive committee overseeing the task force.

Camacho said the government had tightened the system of granting tax incentives by centralizing the issuance of the tax credit certificates in the offices of the internal revenue and customs commissioners.

"We are also ensuring that old certificates issued would no longer be accepted. We would also continue running after companies and individuals who defrauded the government," said the finance chief.

The One Stop Shop, an inter-agency group composed of the finance department, the internal revenue and customs bureaus and the Board of Investments were allowed to issue tax credit certificates to exporters as a form of incentive.

Exporters could use the credits to offset payments for taxes on imported raw materials and supplies, and for corporate income taxes. They were also allowed to transfer these to any BOI-registered company in exchange for goods and services.

The government discovered that unscrupulous businesses had conspired with former finance officials to defraud the government of P5.3 billion that otherwise should have been paid as taxes by companies that benefited from the fraudulent tax credits.

Companies that were found not to have been in operation managed to sell the tax certificates to businesses that were not their suppliers.

Ombudsman wants Jinggoy back in jail

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE OMBUDSMAN has asked the Supreme Court to cancel the bail of Jose "Jinggoy" Estrada, the son of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada and the latter's co-accused in corruption charges, and to have him arrested.

State prosecutors asked the Supreme Court to overturn a Sandiganbayan resolution granting the younger Estrada bail, saying the anti-graft court did so "with grave abuse of discretion, amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction."

The Sandiganbayan allowed Jinggoy to post bail on March 5. The prosecution filed a motion for reconsideration, but this was denied on May 30.

In their petition, the prosecutors said that the special Sandiganbayan division hearing the plunder charges had overlooked the "undisputed" fact that Jinggoy was "a co-conspirator, equally guilty and liable as the principal accused, Joseph Estrada" in the crime of plunder, a non-bailable offense.

The anti-graft court allowed Jinggoy to post bail after it shot down the prosecution's "novel" theory of "overlapping conspiracies."

"'Overlapping conspiracies' is merely a term coined to illustrate the existence of a conspiracy, aimed at a single criminal purpose, at two or more levels, as most corrupt men of power do, leaving the dirty work to their subordinates, who need not know everyone involved in the conspiracy, but all of whom are equally guilty and liable," the petition read.

The government stressed that even the Sandiganbayan's resolutions found that Jinggoy regularly "collected, received, and remitted the bribe money" for his father, according to an agreement between the elder Estrada and former Ilocos Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson,

It said that the Sandiganbayan had noted that the prosecution was able to prove a conspiracy between the elder Estrada and his accomplices, including Jinggoy, through the testimonies of more than 20 witnesses and numerous documents. The prosecution also noted that Jinggoy's lawyers have not presented any evidence in his defense, which it said was "fatal in a petition for bail."

It stressed that "the evidence presented by the prosecution remained uncontroverted since the defense did not present any evidence."

The prosecution argued that since the case against the elder Estrada had already gone through a preliminary investigation and survived a motion to quash, "a probable cause existed that the crime of plunder had been committed" and that the accused was "probably guilty."

It said that the merit of Jinggoy's petition for bail must be determined on the evidence thus far presented, "in this case, the uncontroverted, unrebutted and unchallenged positive, direct, straightforward and credible testimonies of prosecution witnesses as well as the supporting documentary evidence already admitted by the Sandiganbayan."

ESTRADA

GMA wants drugs burned weekly, pushers shamed

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency to publicize the photographs of and personal information on all arrested drug dealers.

She also ordered weekly public burnings of illegal drugs seized by police in the latest initiatives in the government's highly publicized war against illegal drugs.

The PDEA was also directed to make a strict accounting down "to the last gram" of all drugs confiscated, destroyed, or kept for evidence in court cases.

"Let us put a face and identity to these people and get the public involved in hunting them down," Ms Macapagal said in a statement.

"I want his or her photo published and aired over media together with all names and aliases used, passport number, immigration record, places of residence, known cohorts, modus operandi and reward for capture," she said.

But Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said there was a condition attached to the President's order: The PDEA would have to embargo the release of information on a drug suspect whose case is still under investigation.

Bunye said the release of information on any suspect would be "calibrated" to head off criticism from human rights groups.

The President ordered the PDEA to hold a public burning of seized illegal drugs, paraphernalia and raw materials at least once a week to prevent unscrupulous law enforcers from pilfering the stuff and recycling it back into the illicit drug market.

Drug enforcers must set aside a regular day for such public burnings.

"Once charges are filed covering a drug stash, the latter must be immediately destroyed save for the amount needed to be used as evidence in court," the President ordered.

Ms Macapagal announced in June a heightened anti-drug campaign that she said was inspired by the crackdown launched by Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

The Thai leader declared a war against drugs in February and proclaimed the results as a success despite an outcry from human rights groups over the draconian methods used. *Gil C. Cabacungan*

Police general dies in his sleep

A POLICE general died in his sleep early yesterday morning after attending the wake of his sister in California.

Chief Supt. Romulo Sales, police director for the Cagayan Valley region, was found dead inside the bedroom of his relatives' house in Daly City. He was 54.

Director Ricardo de Leon, Philippine National Police spokesperson, said police was told about the death shortly after.

Before he was appointed as Region 2 director, Sales, a member of the Philippine Military Class '72, was deputy director of the National Capital Region Police Office.

He headed the Central Police District before he held the Metro Manila post. *Christian V. Esguerra*

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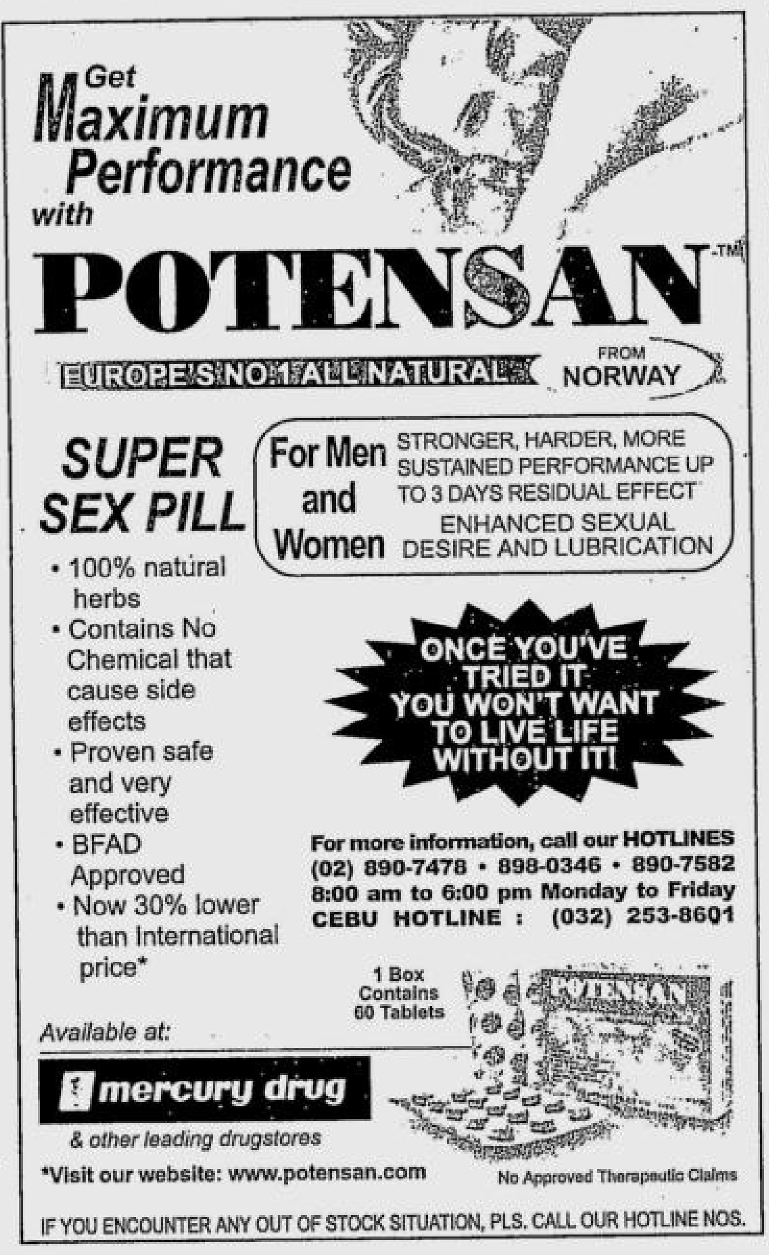

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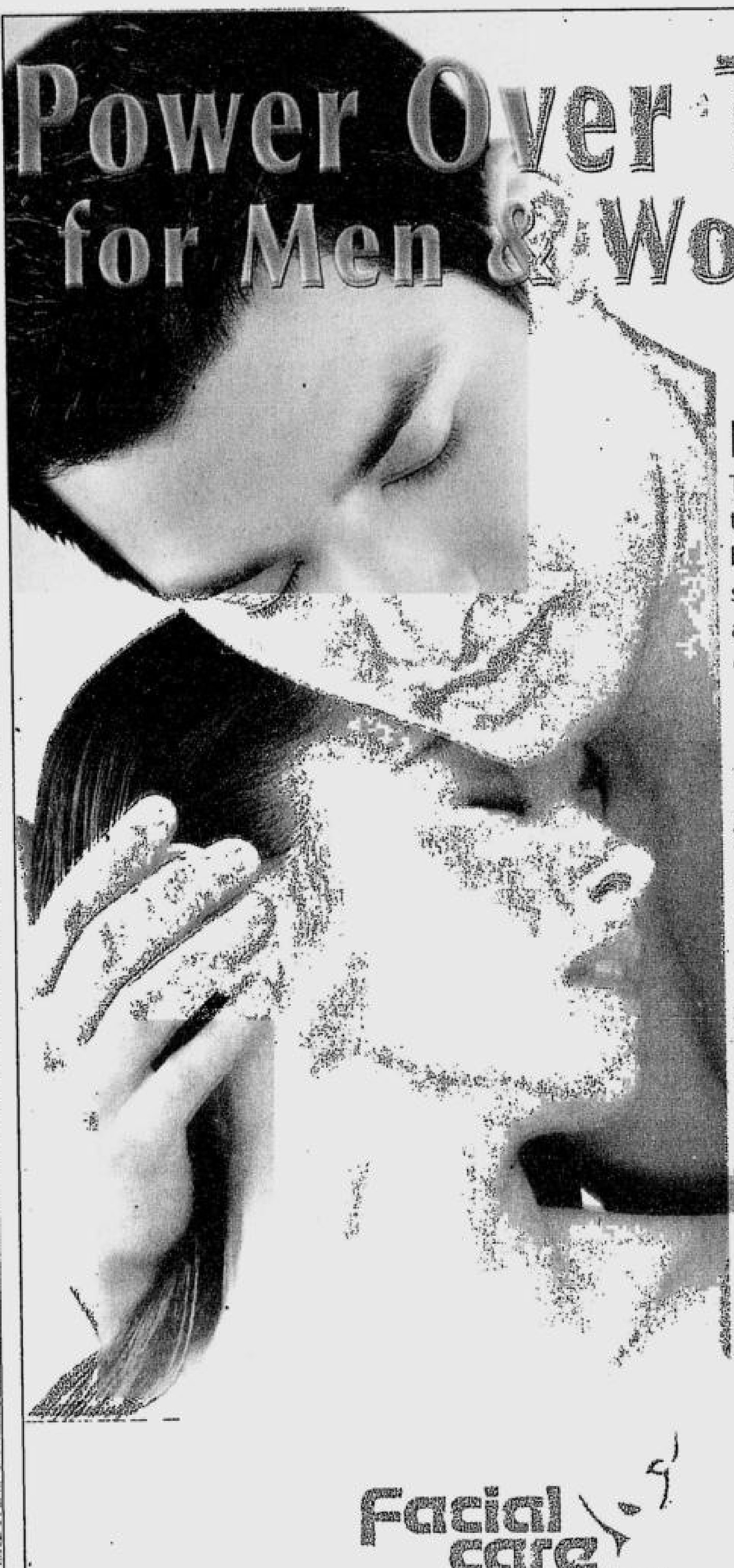

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Australia blames entrenched corruption

MAJOR Australian newspapers blamed entrenched corruption for the jailbreak and warned Manila it could never conquer terrorism until it conquered graft.

The escape occurred while Australian Prime Minister John Howard was in Manila holding talks with President Macapagal on counterterrorism measures and promising her A$5 million in aid.

"The mocking ease with which a convicted Jemaah Islamiah bomb maker escaped from a Manila jail on Monday highlights the formidable challenge of confronting terrorist threats beyond Australia's borders," the Sydney Morning Herald said in an editorial which demanded that corruption be targeted along with terrorism.

"This was no daring escape," the paper said. "In Catholic-majority Philippines, it is not radical Islam but personal profit that has most probably been behind the escape.

"If so, it is a reminder that as long as the security forces and the bureaucracy of the Philippines and other nations in the region remain vulnerable to corruption, no amount of aid for specialist police training can guarantee the antiterrorist effort.

The Australian national newspaper said the escape from what should have been a top-security prison made it alarmingly clear just how easy it was for terrorists to prosper in the Philippines—"which puts the rest of the region at risk."

The newspaper said the escape demonstrated that Manila was not effective in controlling the three things terror organizations needed to prosper—the ability to move about unimpeded, money and entrenched corruption among officials.

"With Al-Ghozi back in circulation, we should brace ourselves for bigger bombs in many more Southeast Asian cities," the editorial concluded.

Foreign Minister Alexander Downer described the escape as "disappointing" and said any underestimation of the threat of JI in the region had been quashed by the escape of one of its key operatives.

Downer said the successful arrests and subsequent trial of the suspected Bali bombers may have overshadowed how large a problem JI is in the rest of the region.

The spokesperson of the US Embassy in Manila also expressed disappointment over the escape but said US-Philippine cooperation in fighting terrorism would continue.

In a television interview, Frank Jenista said "the escape of these three is clearly a setback in the international war against terror."

But Jenista added the jailbreak "doesn't fundamentally change anything" because the Philippines had faced bomb attacks even when the three were in detention.

Despite the escape that embarrassed the Macapagal administration, Jenista said US President George W. Bush was still planning to visit Manila in October.

"We are confident the Philippines is exerting every effort to get these guys back," he said, adding that the embassy was maintaining the standard security precautions that have been in place for months.

Jenista said the US Embassy had asked for the results of any investigation in the jailbreak. "If it turns out that some people were derelict in their duties, then we hope to see that there would be appropriate application of sanctions," he said.

AFP, AP and Reuters

GMA forms independent body to probe escape

From page A1

collusion with the jailers and other officials, Ms Macapagal said in a press statement.

"If there was collusion, this is the gravest act against our national security done so far by persons within the government," she said.

Bunye said Executive Secretary Bert Romulo was going over a list of nominees to the commission and that Malacañang would announce its members soon.

The commission would issue its findings and "comprehensive recommendations" after 30 days, Ms Macapagal said in her statement.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina said the PNP investigation of the jailbreak would be completed in seven days.

Hailed by US President George W. Bush during a White House state visit in May as an important ally in the war against terror, Ms Macapagal has seen her stock fall with the United States and Australia following the escape on Monday of Al-Ghozi.

"We regret the negative repercussions of this incident and we shall get to the root of the matter," she said.

The President urged Congress to include a provision in the antiterrorism bill that would impose the "harshest punishment possible to those found guilty of infidelity in the custody of terrorist suspects."

"Those found colluding with terrorists to enable the latter to escape detention must suffer severely from their aiding these enemies of humanity," she said.

Indonesia and Malaysia has joined the manhunt for the three fugitives. The Philippine government has also offered a reward of P5 million for the capture of Al-Ghozi, P2 million for Abdulmukim Ong Edris, and P1 million for Omar Opik Lasal.

Al-Ghozi, an Indonesian and key member of the Jemaah Islamiah regional terrorist network, has been convicted and sentenced to 12 years in prison for illegal possession of explosives. According to prosecutors, he has also admitted his involvement in the deadly Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila.

Edris and Lasal, alleged members of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, has been implicated in the kidnapping of Americans in Western Mindanao.

Appeal to Muslims

PNP Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, head of the National Capital Region Police Office, appealed to Muslim communities to deny sanctuary to Al-Ghozi, fearing he could be organizing a fresh attack in the metropolis.

"We will still assume the worst-case scenario that he's still around and that he is trying to contact people who have been used by him before to perpetrate some actions," Velasco said in a television interview.

Velasco said he would be meeting with Muslim religious and community leaders later Wednesday to seek their help in tracking down Al-Ghozi, Edris and Lasal.

Velasco said the NCRPO had tapped thousands of *barangay tanods* and security guards in Metro Manila to help in the hunt for the three fugitives. Policemen were also ordered to secure vital installations, including transportation and communication facilities, in the capital. *With reports by Nelson F. Flores and Tina Santos in Manila; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau;*

1 jail guard sleeping, another out shopping

From page A1

of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group said in a press conference.

"Our guards became negligent because they said Al-Ghozi was so good to them," said Matillano, who was tasked with investigating the escape.

Rapport

The rapport reached a point that the guards did not even bother to actually check if the fugitives were still in their cells at the Intelligence Group's old building, he said. "They were supposed to conduct a head count every hour, but they failed to do so."

Only four guards were detailed at Cell Nos. 1 and 2 of the Foreign Intelligence Liaison Office on the second floor of the building at that time, but two of them were not required to stay throughout their duty, he said.

A criminal complaint was filed yesterday against the guards before the Quezon City prosecutor's office for infidelity in the custody of prisoners (evasion through negligence).

Charged were Supt. Guillermo Danipog, Insp. James Dime, SPO3 Ruperto Principe and PO1 Ronald Palmares.

Danipog and Dime, as duty officers, were not required to stay at the compound. Principe, who was sergeant of the guards, was positioned at the main gate and held one of only two keys to the cells. Palmares was assigned outside the detention rooms.

Lt. Col. Leopoldo Bataoil, Philippine National Police spokesperson, said they were also charged administratively with serious neglect of duty, punishable by dismissal.

"While there's still no hard evidence that these people conspired with the fugitives, it's clear that they had been lax in the performance of their duties," Matillano said.

Police are also set to file criminal charges against Supt. Carlito Natanawan, commander of the IG compound, and Supt. Reuben Galban, chief of the IG's foreign intelligence liaison office.

Natanawan held the second key to the captives' detention cells, he said. Natanawan and Galban were sacked Tuesday, largely because of the principle of command responsibility.

The guards allegedly signed the logbook, claiming that they had conducted the routine head count, Matillano said.

Escorted out?

He said it was possible that they even escorted Al-Ghozi, Edris and Lasal out of their cells.

Palmares, he said, suspiciously fell asleep, and Principe left his post just before the prisoners made their escape.

"He [Principe] said he just went out to buy something," Matillano said. "When he returned, he said he noticed nothing suspicious."

Investigators found the jail cell was "intact and sustained no damage," with padlocks still in place, the police official said. The escaped convicts walked along the main hallway, down the stairs to the ground floor and left through the main gate.

From there, they fled Camp Crame through its Santolan gate, which is open 24 hours, he said.

Matillano admitted that policemen assigned at the gate did not log, as a matter of standard operating procedure, the license plate numbers of vehicles. "This is one procedure that we have to correct."

Escape report

It was another inmate, alleged Abu Sayyaf member Mark Gumbahale, alias Abu Tagalog, who first learned of the escape.

The inmates did not bother to take Gumbahale with them because he and Lasal had "bad blood," according to Matillano. While both were alleged members of the notorious bandit group, Lasal belongs to the Yakan tribe and Gumbahale to the Tausug, he noted.

Matillano said Gumbahale immediately reported that the three were not in their cells as early as 5 a.m.

The guards, he said, did not believe the story because the inmates' cells remained locked when they came to check.

When another set of guards arrived shorty before 10 a.m. and noticed that Al-Ghozi, Edris and Lasal were missing, that was only the time they reported the incident to top IG officials, according to Matillano.

Before the escape, Abu Ali, a former detainee who now serves as a utility man at the compound, overheard that the prisoners were planning something, the official said. It was not clear if the information was relayed to IG officials.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday said the escape could not just be blamed on laxity and negligence on the part of the guards.

"I don't want to accept that conclusion. So the second possibility is collusion because of payment. This is dangerous," Biazon said in a press conference.

Even more dangerous, he said, was the third possibility—the infiltration of deep-penetration agents by terrorists themselves in the police ranks.

Oust-Ebdane call

House Minority Floor Leader Carlos Padilla (LDP, Nueva Vizcaya) yesterday pressed for the ouster of Director General Hermogenes Ebdane as chief of the Philippine National Police following the escape.

Padilla even upped the ante by daring President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign if she could not relieve Ebdane.

"She claims that she is Asia's No. 1 terrorism fighter," he said. "Yet right at the central headquarters of the PNP, a suspected international terrorist escapes from his guards."

Padilla said that the continued stay of Ebdane as PNP chief was "no longer tenable and President Macapagal has to fire the PNP chief to prevent more embarrassing breaches in national security."

"The PNP under Ebdane has been making a mockery of the presidency by feeding her wrong data, giving her false information and generally misleading her on the sorry state of the country's anti-terrorism effort," the lawmaker said.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina, however, disagreed with calls for Ebdane to resign as he urged the public to wait first for the results of the investigation.

Quoting Ebdane, Lina said the resignation of the PNP chief was "not the solution to the immediate problem ... the immediate problem that has to be solved is to recapture the trio and to ferret out the truth on who are responsible (for the escape)."

The secretary accompanied the President in her visit yesterday to the hinterland town of Igbaras, 29 kilometers south of Iloilo City.

Ebdane has also found an ally in Senate President Franklin Drilon who said that the PNP chief should be given a chance to do his job and recapture the prisoners, as well as investigate those responsible for the escape.

Drilon explained that asking for Ebdane's head at this point was not the best solution.

"We should give Ebdane the chance to clean up this mess himself. What is important now are not the usual calls for resignations ... but for General Ebdane to be able to fully concentrate on the current campaign to capture Al-Ghozi and two Abu Sayyaf suspects." *With reports from Tina Santos, Michael Lim Ubac and Carlito Pablo; Nestor P. Burgos, PDI Visayas Bureau; and* INQUIRER *wires*

'I hope no one will ever be turned away again'

From page A1

"I was really angry on Tuesday but I want to forget about that," he said. "I just hope this never happens again, that someone would be turned away by a hospital because he is poor."

He told the INQUIRER that, while the MCU Hospital admitted his daughters at about 11 a.m., the hospital later asked them to transfer to another hospital because "MCU had no incubators."

Vladimir said they asked MCU's help in looking for a hospital where the babies could be transferred. MCU called the Philippine General Hospital, but the PGH, a government hospital, asked for P20,000 as down payment for each baby.

But Vladimir, 27, a driver for a car parts company, receives a daily salary of only P250.

He said MCU also asked him to pay about P16,000 in fees, including the rent for the ambulances that would take the babies to another hospital, before the quadruplets could be released.

So while arrangements had been made for the quadruplets' transfer to Fabella, the babies had to wait six more hours, before they were transferred on Tuesday afternoon, because Vladimir had to borrow money from his friends and neighbors.

At about 5 p.m. on Tuesday, the quadruplets were finally transferred to Fabella.

Dr. Ruben Flores, director of the Fabella hospital, told the INQUIRER the babies were "very weak" when they were brought to the hospital.

The temperatures of the babies were also critically low at 35 degrees Celsius. The normal temperature for humans is 37 degrees Celsius.

The babies were also underweight. Jhobelle weighed 900 grams. One of the babies weighed 500 grams. The other two weighed about 1,000 grams.

The first baby died about 8 p.m. of the same evening, while the second baby died about 45 minutes later. The third baby died at about 4:30 a.m. yesterday.

At about 9 a.m. yesterday, the National Children's Hospital sent an incubator for Jhobelle.

In a statement, MCU denied that it withheld treatment for the quadruplets because the family could not pay.

"There was never an attempt to ask for deposit because admission cannot be made as all our incubators were occupied," the hospital said.

In Fabella, attending pediatrician Anita Marasigan told the INQUIRER the incubator was "not necessarily a life-saving device."

She added that Jhobelle was still in critical condition and would be under close observation for possible infections. Another doctor said the baby had to be closely observed for the next 12 to 48 hours.

Marasigan said Jhobelle's lungs were still underdeveloped and they would be closely monitoring the baby's respiratory system.

Premature delivery

Jocelyn was originally scheduled to give birth in October. But on Tuesday morning, she was rushed to a clinic in 6th Avenue, Caloocan City, because of labor pains.

Jocelyn told the INQUIRER that her doctor at the Espiritu Lying-In Clinic had no choice but to deliver the quadruplets normally.

Jocelyn said she was scheduled for a caesarian delivery because she was bearing four babies.

She said she first learned she would be delivering a quadruplet on the fifth month of pregnancy through an ultrasound test.

Vladimir also said they had already bought a few dresses for the babies.

"I got excited when I learned we will have quadruplets. We first thought (Jocelyn) would be giving birth to two girls and two boys," Vladimir said.

Vladimir first tried to keep the news about the three babies' death from Jocelyn. But the mother, who was initially left at the clinic where she gave birth, had an instinct something was happening and decided to go to Fabella to personally see her daughters.

Jocelyn broke into tears when she learned that only one of her daughters remained.

"Don't cry. At least God let one of our angels live," Vladimir kept whispering to his wife as they both looked on at Jhobelle, who was inside the hospital's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

Not rare

Marasigan said that in her more than 10 years at Fabella, she had seen several cases of quadruplet births, the last being about two years ago.

But she said what was rare was the chance that all four prematurely born babies would survive.

She said Jocelyn's premature delivery could have been triggered by several factors.

Since four babies were crammed into her uterus, it was possible that the crowded space could have pushed the babies out, she said.

Another reason could be the inadequate supply of oxygen and other nutrients inside her womb. Infections and even stress could have also triggered the premature delivery.

If only the babies were born on time, their chances of survival could have been better.

She added that the babies could have had better chances had they been born though caesarian operation. Jocelyn said her doctor had no choice but to perform a normal delivery because about 10:40 a.m. on Tuesday, the two babies were already coming out.

Support comes in

Flores also said the hospital would be shouldering Jhobelle's expenses.

Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo promised the family he would pay for the burial of the three daughters as well as Jocelyn's expenses at the lying-in clinic. He added he would convene a meeting to launch an investigation and get the side of MCU.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development also sent a representative to the hospital to see how they could help the family.

Vladimir said all he is praying for now is Jhobelle's survival.

He said he was trying to forget the horrors of his ordeal the other day.

He admitted to being a bit tired and said he had not changed clothes since yesterday. But because he's trying to insure his daughter's survival, he will cope, he said.

The plight of the quadruplets triggered public anger and sympathy after Vladimir sought the help of a group of radio reporters and complained that he was being passed from one hospital to another because he could not afford the bill.

The Calisaans also have a one-year-old daughter.

The quadruplets' plight generated sympathy from politicians to common folk.

Former first lady Imelda Marcos, Manila Rep. Harry Angping and the mayors of Caloocan and Manila all pledged to help the Calisaans.

Ordinary people bombarded radio stations with angry comments against hospitals that demand deposits even before admitting patients.

The Calisaans said their daughters would not have died if they were rich.

Jocelyn said she could not do anything but weep and think of fitting names for her "angels"

Con men selling lots in 'Meteor Garden'

From page A1

a complaint that flyers advertising the availability of lots at the Marvelous Eco-Townhomes and Residences (Meteor) Gardens were being circulated last week. When the HUDCC checked last Monday, Meteor Gardens turned out to be a "phantom village."

HUDCC chair Michael Defensor, in a press statement, said the place was nonexistent and the firm selling the lots is part of a squatting syndicate.

"The phantom village with the catchy acronym Meteor Gardens is a concoction of a squatting syndicate operating in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog," Defensor said.

"A group of land grabbers is riding on the popularity of the Taiwan-made television soap to dupe the public," he said.

Flyers announcing the sale of lots in Meteor Gardens were distributed in front of the Baclaran church in Parañaque City last week, the HUDCC learned.

The agency was able to get hold of a copy of a flyer which encouraged "OFWs and SSS members to buy lots in Meteor Gardens in Taguig, Fairview and Bacoor, Cavite.

"For the price of a cell phone, you can start owning a housing lot. P5,000 *lang*!" the flyer's sales pitch added.

A contact number was also on the flyer but when the HUDCC tried to call the number, it had already been disconnected. The flyer did not identify the company selling the lots.

The HUDCC said no permit was ever issued for the sale of lots in a place called Meteor Gardens.

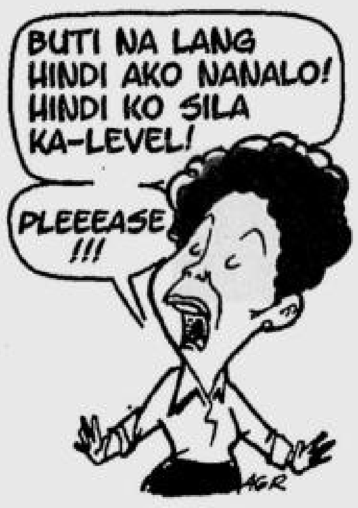
The HUDCC has referred the case of the ghost village to the police.

Defensor warned lot buyers to deal only with licensed real estate brokers and not to part with their money until they have checked and verified the documents and have seen the property.

"Meteor Garden" is a Taiwanese soap opera dubbed in Filipino and aired in the Philippines on ABS-CBN. It stars F4, a boy band, whose looks are attracting a local following, especially among teenage girls.

More quotes from Miriam, this time on ex-colleagues

By Jerry Esplanada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AGR

HAVING disposed of the emerging crop of presidential aspirants the other day with a few choice epithets, ex-senator Miriam Defensor Santiago has next turned on her former colleagues at the Senate.

Explaining why she was not interested in running for the Senate or any public office, she said the upper chamber was "really the land of the living dead," a body full of "oleaginous characters" where corruption was "at its most paradigmatic."

As for the people in it, she says they are the "dregs of humanity."

The incorrigible Santiago, also formerly immigration commissioner, agrarian reform secretary and regional trial court judge, said she had been approached by at least three political leaders, including businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, to join their teams.

But she professes not to be interested because politics no longer offers her a challenge.

"I figure all it needs is a lot of money. So borrow it, beg for it, steal it. Just accumulate money and you're fixed in politics," she said.

"I've told these people I don't know what earthly use I could be to them. (But) I promised these three people I would listen to them at a certain critical period. I don't know if I will say yes but I have promised I will accept an invitation to a dialogue. That's all I have promised," she said.

Santiago, who lost in the 2001 senatorial elections and claims to have been cheated in the 1992 presidential polls that former President Fidel Ramos won, said she did not miss the Senate.

"It was like living a nightmare. I was very miserable every single month of my six years in the Senate. I was always consulting my family, my close friends, even my spiritual advisers on whether it would be ethical for me to resign," she said.

Santiago, who is something of a constitutional expert, said that when she was a neophyte senator she had concluded that the legislative system was "stupid but the same stupid system worked. It's one of the paradoxes in political science."

Her worst fears were confirmed by her subsequent political experience.

"It was the total lack of principles. I couldn't tolerate the absolute commitment to greed, selfishness and the shameless ambition to hold positions for which many, at least most of them, are not qualified," she said.

Most members of Congress are "not even qualified to be there," she said.

Apparently referring to former broadcast journalists, Senators Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda, Santiago said: "How can we possibly vote for news readers to make policy? What is the qualification? What is in the mind of the *masa* (the poor) that connects legislation with frequency of public exposure?"

Commenting on the two senators' qualifications for higher office the other day, Santiago said they were both "incompetent."

She said there was no incentive for qualified and honest people to join the Senate which is why the only ones who manage to get in were "the dregs of humanity, people of overweening ambition."

"They think legislation is a matter of posing for the cameras or giving sound bites or bribing reporters so that they can be played up in the evening news. And very often they triumph in this way," she said.

Santiago has gone back to the practice of law. She says her law firm has a "few retainers" but does not accept trial cases "because the judiciary is corrupt and I don't run a law office that bribes judges."

Naia 3 concessionaires worried about contracts

CONCESSIONAIRES of the controversial Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport have expressed concerned over their concession agreement with the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) and have urged the government to push for the early opening of the terminal.

The Philippine Airport Services Concessionaires (Pasco) met with the three members of the Naia 3 oversight committee composed of Secretaries Manuel "Mar" Roxas of trade and industry, Richard Gordon of tourism and and Leandro Mendoza of transportation and communication to discuss the status of their concession agreements with Piatco.

The committee was formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo following the Supreme Court decision to declare null and void the government's contract with Piatco for the building and operation of the terminal.

Roxas, chairman of the committee, expressed sympathy for the plight of Pasco members but told them that all the committee could do now was to listen to their concerns and to take note of their apprehensions pending the outcome of Piatco's motion for reconsideration in the Supreme Court.

ERRATUM

SM Supermarket's ongoing Total Lower Cost (TLC) promo from July 11 to 31, 2003 which featured the item: Napoleon VSOP Brandy, 750 mL. at TLC price of P 174.50 with regular price of P 185.00, should have been at TLC price of P 184.50 with a regular price of P 194.50. Our apologies.

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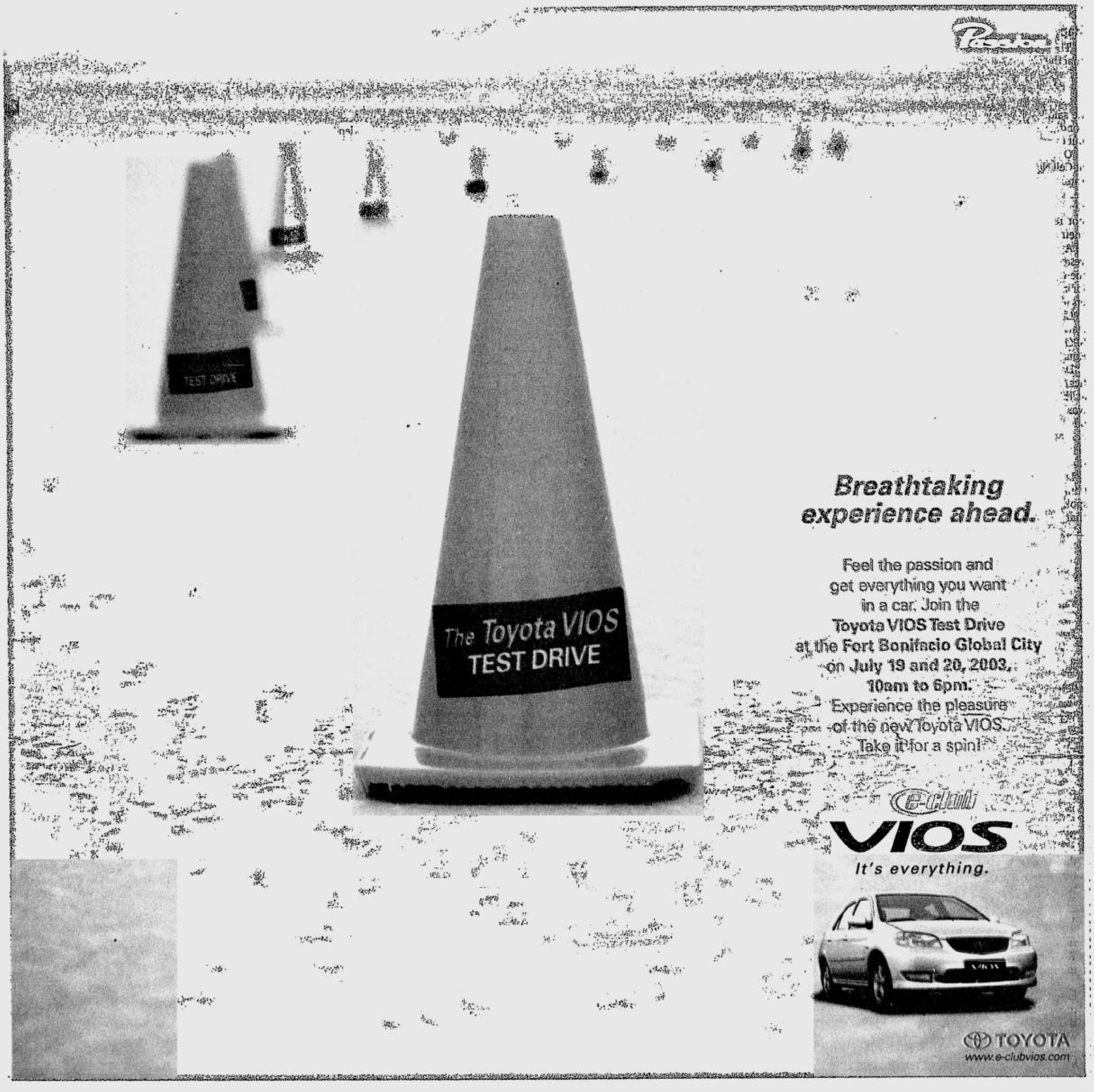

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Out with Ebdane

EDITORIAL

THIS early, speculation is rife that Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, the self-confessed mastermind of the 2000 Rizal Day blasts, was spirited out and had not merely "escaped" with two Abu Sayyaf members before dawn Monday. For it is unimaginable for Al-Ghozi to have escaped, as reported, from a tightly guarded cell where everybody has to pass through at least three security clearances before getting out.

What is even more shocking is that it happened right inside Camp Crame, headquarters of the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the detention center was that of the Intelligence Group (IG). Suffice it to say that the IG is easily the PNP's elite of the elite, and its office complex, naturally, a camp within a camp. As the red-faced PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane has admitted, "it is impossible for someone to get out of the cell without assistance from the other side of the door."

The jailbreak, whatever the reason behind it, is unforgivable. It is a black eye not only to Philippine efforts to clamp down on terrorism, but to the global coalition where the country has, until the other day, stood tall for being able to neutralize terrorists like Al-Ghozi. That it happened during the state visit of Australian Prime Minister John Howard should prompt President Macapagal-Arroyo to take more drastic measures.

There she was, strengthening the anti-terror alliance with Howard, while her police officials were sleeping on the job. This propensity for big words and big speeches has finally caught up with her. Recently, she ordered the construction of more jails to house drug pushers. Now that would be absurd when even Camp Crame can't keep its jails secure.

Howard, for one, must have been discomfited by the surprise welcome. Following the Bali blasts, the feisty premier made it known that he wanted "pre-emptive strikes" on countries harboring terrorists. He might as well train his missiles on Camp Crame for providing cozy free board and lodging to suspected terrorists and engineering their escape. Camp Crame, as everybody knows by now, has a curious history of high-profile jailbreaks that began with Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani in 1995.

Monday's escape was in fact the third under Ebdane's very nose. In June last year, Faisal Marohombsar, chieftain of the notorious Pentagon gang, bolted from the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktaf) headquarters, along with his aide, Abdul Macaumbang, and Rolando Patinio, prime suspect in the assassination of Baron Cervantes. Ebdane was the Naktaf head at that time; he was No. 2 in the police hierarchy. Marohombsar then taunted the PNP that he escaped by changing the padlocks. Much later, he, Macaumbang and Patinio were killed in separate shootouts, perhaps silenced forever from revealing more.

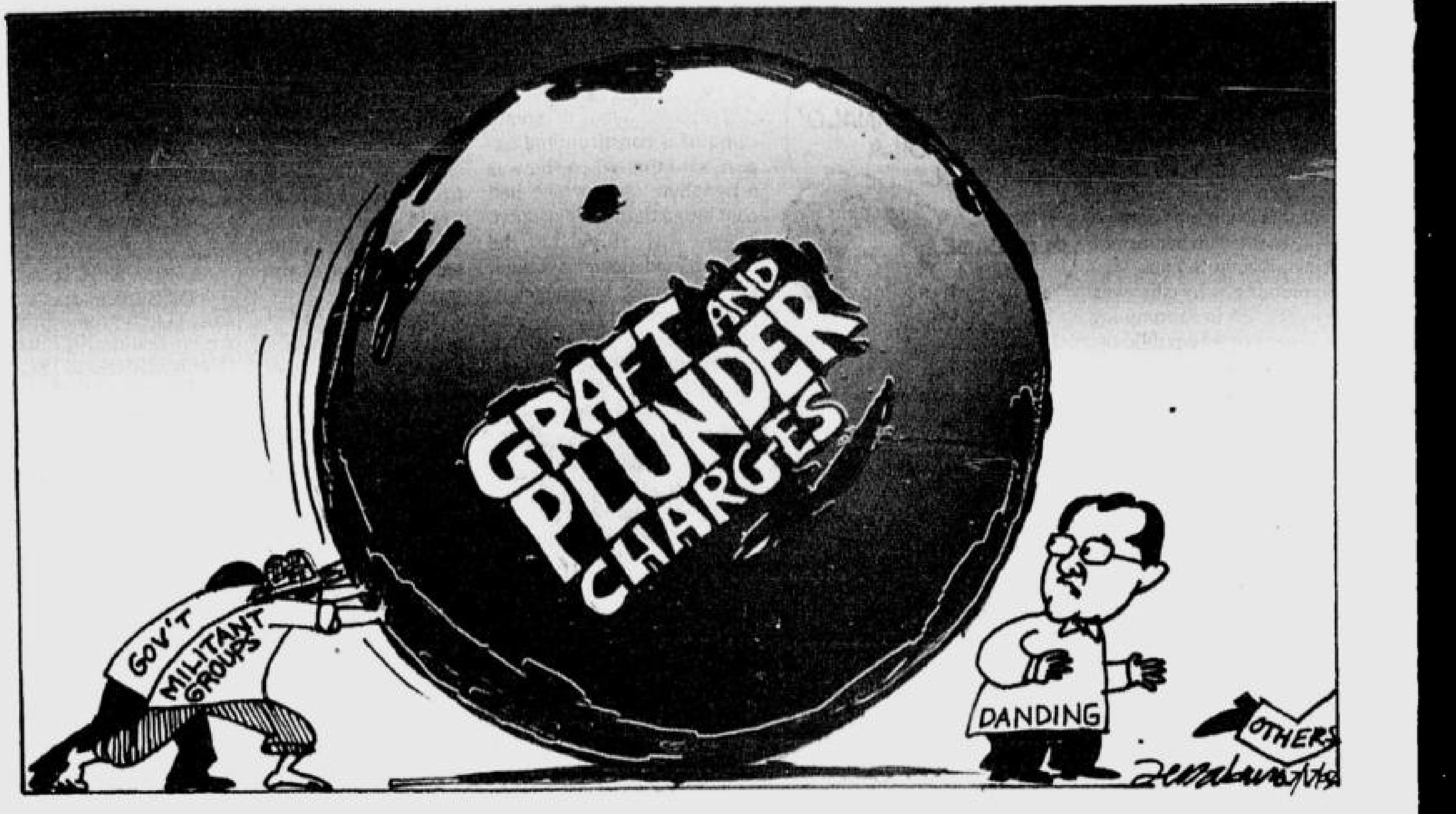
Three months later, a suspected big-time drug trafficker, Henry Tan, sawed off the window grills of his cell inside the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), climbed up the adjoining wall, and jumped to freedom. While the PDEA is a separate republic, its office is just a few steps away from Ebdane's, and the agency is completely manned by PNP personnel.

Al-Ghozi is not an ordinary prisoner. He is an international terrorist, a proud lieutenant of the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah, willing to die—and kill—for Allah and, therefore, high-risk. Al-Ghozi must be armed and dangerous by now, considering he was caught with explosives and millions in cash when first arrested in February last year.

Worse, he brought along Abdulmukim Edris, alleged Abu Sayyaf demolition expert who was supposed to stage a repeat of the deadly Rizal Day bombings, perhaps, among other places, at the Australian Embassy.

Ebdane's immediate relief of IG Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza is only proper. But he should have gone a step further by offering to resign to allow her boss, and the nation as well, to save face. Come to think of it, Ebdane has been a failure by Ms Macapagal's standards. He failed to meet the one-year deadline to annihilate 21 kidnap gangs. He failed to sustain the short-lived campaign versus gambling and loose firearms.

On top of Monday's blunder, Ebdane informed the President of the escape only at 1 p.m., or 10 hours after the fact. Keeping the President clueless for that long is no less than an affront to the appointing power. It reflects the lack of control and discipline down the line, traits the PNP is not exactly famous for. Obviously, that culture has gone up Ebdane's head. For that alone, his head must roll.



Why there are no takers for gov't assets

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

IN SPITE of the multimillion-peso lawsuits that the government has won, it is still very much in the red. The P100 billion to P150 billion in coco levy funds must be used for the coconut industry and the farmers, and the P36-billion Marcos loot has to be used for the agrarian reform program as the law mandates. So the government is still desperate for cash not only to finance the budget deficit but also to pay for maturing loans. Worse, taxes already collected are stolen by government personnel or refunded to supposedly big taxpayers. For example, Meralco is asking for a tax refund from the Bureau of Internal Revenue amounting to billions of pesos and another refund of P8 billion from Napocor. Even those who did not pay taxes and ghost companies are given tax refunds in the form of tax credit certificates.

So the BIR is squeezing the small taxpayers, like *tianggeros* who are taxed in advance even before they earn a single centavo, because it could not get from the big ones. And so the government has embarked on a bargain sale of almost all its available assets like a bankrupt heir selling all the family heirlooms. It is selling its shares in sequestered companies, government corporations, real estate including, *bilib* it or not, the Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa.

Unfortunately, the situation is not right for privatization. A global economic depression and legal complications discourage potential buyers. Last year, the government took only P1.1 billion from the privatization program. Already, the auctions for Napocor's $2-billion transmission assets and for the lot where the International School stands have been declared a failure. A lease for the IS lot doesn't elicit any enthusiasm either, not when you have overextended private firms selling their private assets.

How would the administration convince investors to fork over the needed billions for debt-saddled companies with a pile of lawsuits? If you had the money, would you bid for the government shares in Meralco? Would you bid for Napocor? Would you bid for the Philippine National Construction Corp?

If I were Danding Cojuangco, I would bid for the government shares in San Miguel Corp., if only to keep my job as head honcho of SMC. If I were Lucio Tan, I would bid for the government stake in PNB so they can't take it away from me. But Meralco, Napocor and PNCC?

Who'll want to buy Meralco with the Lopezes in control? Not with the specter of P30 billion in refunds hanging over the firm, which already is buried under a pile of debts. Not with those reports of luxury perks tacked on to our electric bills—including a firing range, for God's sake!

Only a masochist would take Napocor, with the unresolved issues of those sweetheart deals with the Independent Power Producers and its tangled network of co-dependent subsidiaries.

And I wouldn't touch the PNCC, not if you pay me to take over that dinosaur. Last week, Finance Undersecretary Eric Recto finally announced what observers had predicted: There will be no privatization of the PNCC.

Recto cast a positive spin on the story. The National Development Corp., a government corporation, is undertaking the P2.4-billion expansion of the South Luzon Expressway. Since the NDC is underwriting the project, it is best for the government to retain control of the PNCC.

Fair enough. But it begs the question. Why has not any private investor applied to participate in the SLEX program? Why is a cash-strapped government again investing billions when the state had already decided to unburden itself of government corporations years back?

A review of the PNCC's joint ventures with the private sector could help find the answer.

Privatization, mind you, is a great concept. The Philippine government has always suffered from having to subsidize inefficient corporations that are often used as milking cows by cronies of successive administrations.

There will always be gamblers among the big investors. But being hard-nosed businessmen, they will first sniff around before putting in their money. In the case of the PNCC and other government firms, huge debts and legal entanglements represent major headaches. Investors stay away not only because Marcos cronies are still trying to reclaim stakes in the companies but also because the government is often not forthright in revealing the bottom line of these companies.

For example, the PNCC is saddled with P13 billion to P15 billion worth of debts. It was rather cavalier of government officials to dismiss collection suits with a shrug, saying investors would have to deal with these cases.

Even the prospect of steady income from toll fees cannot offset the danger of an investor waking up one day, after paying the government a hefty bundle, to find the courts have upheld a creditor's right to collect.

So don't expect a long line of panting investors in this round. Instead, expect prospective investors to scrutinize the new list of assets being sold with a magnifying glass. What they will see is not a pretty sight.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE is a continuation of yesterday's:

After many months, the former parishioner saw the priest again in another parish.

***"Kumusta po kayo, Among?"* he greeted the priest.**

***"Eto, parosa-rosario na lang,"* the priest replied.**

Then he called into the kitchen: "Rosario, *dalhan mo nga kami ng merienda.*"

History

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

JOHN Howard, who has just breezed through Manila for a state visit, had an interesting thing to say about the scandal that has blown up in George W. Bush's face and those of the world leaders who ardently supported him. The reason for the scandal is recent revelations in the United States that there was absolutely no basis to the notion, peddled by Bush last January in a speech before Congress, that Saddam Hussein was shopping for nuclear weapons in Africa. It was a mere fabrication by the CIA.

Said Howard, unfazed: "I think (the case) has been blown out of proportion and people should remember that there are other elements to the intelligence jigsaw on which our decision is based. If I'd known about this shock revelation, it wouldn't have made one jot of difference to the decision that my government took because it was in overall terms a tiny part of the total picture."

What makes it hilarious is that he should imagine people's reaction to Bush's lies is overblown and what they did to turn a molehill into a mountain was not. Can anything be more "blown out of proportion" than the case Bush made of Saddam posing a grave and imminent threat to the United States, the Middle East and the world? Of course, if Howard had known Saddam was **not** buying nuclear arms in Africa, it wouldn't have made one jot of difference to him. He was determined to join America in attacking Iraq on whatever pretext. The total picture has nothing to do with any threat Saddam represented, it has to do with political and economic calculation.

Bush did try to sell the "total picture" to the American public last year, shoving the weapons-of-mass-destruction line to the back burner and pitching the need for a "preventive strike" to remove the long-term threat Saddam represented and bring democracy to that benighted land. It didn't sell. Americans were unwilling to sacrifice lives and money, not necessarily in that order, to get stuck in another Vietnam or the American version of Afghanistan. So he promptly went back to the weapons-of-mass-destruction tack. That proved more effective. But as is patent now, if indeed it wasn't so before, the only weapons of mass destruction that existed in reality were the ones Bush was employing to massively destroy the foundations of the world order as we know it.

Even more hilariously (though the Iraqis are not laughing), Tony Blair is in deep, well, the word is not used in polite conversation, after his communications chief, Alastair Campbell, admitted his brief against Saddam came in part from a graduate thesis someone had posted in the Internet! As blowing up things goes, well, it's not the American or Australian or British public that has made a pastime of it.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo finds herself in the same deep the-word-is-not-used-in-polite-conversation. Manuel Villar, the head of the Senate foreign affairs committee, wants her investigated for throwing her support behind Bush on such flimsy evidence. He wants the idea of sending a peacekeeping force to Iraq scrapped on the ground that it is an embarrassment to the nation.

I agree wholeheartedly and wish him well. I can only suggest that he add Angelo Reyes, GMA's defense chief, and Roilo Golez, her security adviser, to the list. They were the ones who kept echoing Bush's mantra over weapons of mass destruction and even adding their own concoctions to sweeten the pot. They were the ones who kept saying if Iraq wasn't attacked, Saddam's biological weapons would find their way into the hands of the MILF. Talk of blowing things out of proportion.

Not quite incidentally, the notion that Saddam had any links to Osama bin Laden or the al-Qaida has been debunked in the United States, which is yet another reason Bush now finds himself in a political quagmire. He really should be impeached. His lie is infinitely bigger and more harmful than Nixon's.

Ignacio Bunye defends his boss thus: "What happened in Iraq has already happened and our President decided based on what she thought was correct." Well, to begin with, so what if what happened in Iraq has already happened? What is this, another case of something being a fait accompli so let's just forgive and forget? We could have said the same thing when Chavit Singson came out with his exposé on Erap. "What has happened has already happened, Erap decided to lop off profits from *jueteng* based on what he thought was correct." Maybe we should have. Had we done so, GMA would not have been free to plunge the country back to the status of an American colony.

But, no, there is no statute of limitations on wrongdoing. The only thing GMA thought was correct was that her position of all-out support for Bush's "anti-terrorism" would give her a second crack at the presidency. She has been capitalizing on it since, with her supporters claiming Bush wants her to run for president again. A claim as reliable as the weapons of mass destruction she and Bush trotted out before their publics.

GMA's support for Bush's war had no place in the horizons set by Edsa II. It had neither morality nor practicality, going as it did against the grain of world opinion—and not quite incidentally the Catholic one, the Pope having lashed out against it—and against the welfare of the overseas Filipino workers in the Gulf. I could not for the life of me understand how the so-called progressives in GMA's administration could have stood by and let an atrocity of such a scale pass. As indeed the other atrocity which is the war against Muslim Mindanao paraded as a war against terrorism. You cannot draw the line at things like these, you will never draw the line anywhere.

Bunye is right though about one thing. History will judge GMA. As well as everyone who helped her mount the iniquity. History will judge them:

Harshly.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Keep tight watch on other high-profile detainees

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WIN some, lose some. The government won in the Supreme Court which awarded it the Swiss deposits of the Marcoses, now held in escrow in the Philippine National Bank. It's a long overdue award. Justice Renato Corona, who penned the decision, said there was no doubt in the Court's mind that "respondent Marcoses admitted (their) ownership." One evidence is the fact that the Marcoses employed at one time 36 Swiss lawyers to defend them against the PCGG's recovery effort.

* * *

The dawn escape from Camp Crame of Fathur Raman al-Ghozi, the confessed principal in the Rizal Day bombings of 2001 and an alleged senior leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, couldn't be more unfortunate—or embarrassing—for the Macapagal administration. That escape has earned us prominent space once again on the international news channels, after a long absence.

It happened in the headquarters of the Philippine National Police during the visit of Australian Prime Minister John Howard. Probably it was timed for his visit, as Howard is the chief executive of the country with the most number of nationals killed or hurt during the Bali bombing last year, believed carried out by the Jemaah Islamiyah. Howard minced no words in decrying the escape as a "serious setback" to the international war against terrorism and stressed the need to strengthen "our institutional capacity" to deal effectively with terrorism.

Then, too, it came less than two weeks before the opening of Congress, at a time when the President wishes to project a "strong republic."

* * *

The escape makes the PNP and the administration look inept, which is the intention of whoever masterminded it. This perception is unfortunate, for the PNP has been making a lot of headway in the anti-crime situation, and various surveys show that people have commended GMA for efficient handling of various national problems. The PNP has been quite successful in cracking down on kidnap and car theft gangs and illegal-drug trafficking. The busting of a drug laboratory in respectable Horseshoe Village in San Juan by PNP Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay's task force mitigates the anguish over Al-Ghozi's escape.

President Macapagal-Arroyo shouldn't just relieve the chief of the national police intelligence group and the jail guards. Bigger heads should roll and some are even suggesting that Director General Hermogenes Ebdane should offer to resign on the principle of command responsibility, despite his good performance elsewhere. I feel sorry for Ebdane.

* * *

It takes little brilliance to realize that Al-Ghozi's escape was facilitated with a duplicate key. PNP insiders told me the jail doors were opened to let out the maximum-security prisoners. This recalls the escape of renegade Gregorio Honasan from confinement on a ship during Holy Week of 1988, with the aid of sympathetic guards, and that of former beauty queen and NPA sympathizer Nelia Sancho from a Cagayan de Oro jail after befriending the guards.

Perhaps this is a good occasion to review the detention status of other high-profile detainees such as Nur Misuari and Joseph Estrada. No more embarrassing escapes please.

* * *

Who stands to gain from this big embarrassment? Money definitely changed hands, and the terrorist organizations that Al-Ghozi is identified with could have paid enormous amounts for his escape.

There is also the political angle. Many people doubtless are tempted to think of her political enemies and ask which politician would have the motive, financial resources and connections within the PNP to work out Al-Ghozi's escape.

One thing is sure: the government's P8-million bounty for Al-Ghozi's group's capture is paltry, compared to the grease money that facilitated the opening of that escape door.

* * *

The escape is tragic as it rubs some of the glory from the government's intensified anti-drug campaign which has been going great. Aside from the seizure of 500 kilos of illegal drugs from Horseshoe Village, Interior Secretary Jose Lina revealed at the recent MOPC "DILG Night" that the Simbahan Group, headed by Benito Simbahan and the biggest drug group in Southern Luzon, was neutralized by PNP operatives. In Lipa City, a shabu lab was also busted and seven Chinese nationals arrested. Last Saturday a big shabu haul was burned in Cavite. Lina said that during the first year of the Macapagal administration, eight shabu laboratories and big protectors were neutralized.

* * *

The President has also allocated P1 billion to the anti-drug campaign, the biggest amount ever dedicated to such a campaign, and some of it will be used to build more jails as the number of apprehensions of drug pushers and manufacturers escalates, as well as more drug rehabilitation centers for users. These rehab centers will play a crucial role, for 1999 statistics show that 3.4 million Filipinos were drug users, 1.8 million regular users and 1.6 occasional users. Seventy percent of criminals in the country's prisons were convicted of drug-related crimes.

* * *

Lina revealed that most of the components in shabu manufacture come from China, Taiwan and North Korea. There is need to intensify networking with authorities from those countries to cut the supply, he said. He added that the government is trying to reduce both supply and demand for shabu. The drug is now manufactured in a variety of places—from small kitchens right in the city to foreign vessels docked off RP waters. To reduce the demand, Lina stressed the need to address the root causes of poverty and underdevelopment since one reason the young turn to drugs is lack of work opportunities. Schools are also being enjoined to monitor students more closely.

A complete life

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HERE'S the conclusion of the talk Mario Taguiwalo delivered at the final rites for his son Mike, 18, before Mike's remains were cremated last June 6.

* * *

THE GREATEST source of pain for me is when I slip into the easy mistake of thinking about Mike's life in terms of what are still ahead for his living peers and contemporaries. I feel bad that Mike was robbed of his chance to fully enjoy his college, robbed of the opportunities for attaining the personal triumphs of a young adult, robbed of the satisfaction of a rewarding career and his own family. My heart aches for everything that he will now miss.

Yet, Mike's life through his own eyes was not a tragic story of missing out on great possibilities. Rather, Mike's life was really about the full realization of what he fiercely wanted for himself. Mike was given a short time on this earth, but he had a complete life on his own terms.

He really reveled in the comforts of our home, the company of his brothers and the love of his parents. And he died at home in the bosom of his family, in the midst of his body of work, in front of his specially souped-up computer, beside his collections of computer games, strange downloads and lots of cool stuff. In terms of Mike's three most favorite computer games, what happened to him was a "Quake," more than a "Half-Life" and certainly "Unreal."

He wanted to be an artist and he became one in attitude, practice, discipline, output and lifestyle, including the added qualification of a tragic death.

He wanted so much to be in the UP College of Fine Arts and he became very much a part of that scene for one school year and most of a summer. When he had settled down at FA, he said that he was already in heaven.

He treasured his friends and had many really special ones he cared about and who cared for him in return. Many of these friends mourn him for the unique and special ways he touched each of them.

He wanted to grow his hair long and find his own unique personal look and he lies in state in that long hair and in the proud glory of his chosen regalia.

* * *

BUT on the other hand, what does Mike mean to us whom he left behind? We celebrate the joys and blessings he brought to our lives. We mourn and grieve for the loss of his presence in our future. But what does he say to us about our own lives without him? This is what I have come up so far through the haze of my own tears and the agony of my personal grief. Mike's birth, short life and early death speak to me in these words.

Treasure life. It is precious, unique, a gift, deliberate and never accidental, a source of infinite impact within a finite duration.

Fill our time with joy and meaning. Trust in the innocence, purity and goodness of our deepest desires and highest aspirations, and devote ourselves to their clarification, pursuit and fulfillment.

Do not be afraid of death but be prepared to die. Death will come, and we need to be always open to the signs and signals of its impending approach and eventual arrival.

We are part of something greater, much more enduring, and more profound than our important individual lives. The certainty of this larger purpose makes our individual lives truly connected.

* * *

IN THE MOVIE, "Adaptation," which was the movie that Beaulah and I saw the night before Mike died, Nicolas Cage as one of the twin brothers tells Nicolas Cage as the other twin, "We are who we are because of whom we love, not because of who loves us." Because I love Mike, I became the person I am and even if Mike is no longer in this world to love me, I will become who I am because I will continue to love him. In the 18 eternal and boundless years that Mike lived in my world, he reminded me that there is so much joy, happiness, pleasure, fun and wonderful things in life. Yet, Mike also helped me confront the reality of death, not as some punishment for what we have done or failed to do, not as some dire warning for the living to change their misguided ways, not as a somehow deserved fate or an otherwise avoidable outcome, but simply as a fact in our earthly existence.

Our death is not up to us, but our joy in life is entirely ours.

May we find some comfort in all of this pain, some relief from our despair, and some hope in what is ahead, now that my dearest, most precious and everlasting Mike has passed on.

For me and my family, we hope we will eventually wake up one day to a world without our beloved Mike and find this fact understandable if never explainable, acceptable if never justifiable, and a reality we can embrace despite the pain because our love for Mike and his love for us can only be for the good.

May I request all of us to give Mike's life a round of applause that an artist would die for.

* * *

AS MARIO'S note said, and as attested by those who were at the rites, the applause that everyone gave Mike was "strong, loud and hearty, a thunderous rolling clapping that released people's grief and rejoicing at the same time."

Many days later, through our same e-group, Marian Pastor Roces wrote another fitting epitaph for Mike Taguiwalo's brief but full life. She said: "(W)hat inspires me to write to you is the bit in your words from Mike's interment that spoke about the life of an artist that he will never have. It is the world in which I exist....and so from this vantage, please let me, in a way, speak from the future of your son. The world of art will only exist as critical engagement of Empire. This is its shape in the early 21st century. This is a shape, of course, that men and women like you have contributed to creating. Hence, your own future as participants in the work of crafting equitable new social orders will be Mike's future."

Subsidence and other problems

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

OKAY, it did not happen. Last Monday, July 14, 9:29 a.m. was the time Metro Manila would have been wetter than wet, floating if not submerged.

That is, if the sky and the sea conspired. University of the Philippines scientists had predicted a 1.45-meter increase in the water level, not a record high, but the highest for 2003.

A photo caption came out the next day saying the prediction of high tide did not occur, referring to the special report we wrote the previous day. The highest tide **did** occur. What did not occur was a deluge, thank heavens—and I say this literally—because the heavens did not open to pour down rain that would go with the high tide.

But I do thank the INQUIRER art section for translating my otherwise so technical story based on the study of the UP National Institute for Geological Science (NIGS). At the last minute my story had to be drastically cut (something a writer dreads) to give way to the graphics.

Yes, as I said, there is no stopping the steady rise in the sea level every year (no thanks to the greenhouse effect and the earth's heating up for which people are to blame). But if human beings took better care of this planet or their particular habitat, things need not be that bad.

Floods will become more frequent, scientists warn. They will be more widespread, more destructive, higher and long-lasting. We are seeing this now in Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela) and the three provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga and Bataan. The UP scientists use the phrase "enhanced flooding," which implies that it is worse than what it should be.

Flooding is common in areas near Manila Bay because of geographical factors. But enhanced flooding is caused mainly by people's uncaring attitude. The Mount Pinatubo debris dumped on the three provinces should not take all the blame. Encroaching fishponds and houses, wrong garbage disposal and siltation resulting from deforestation and consequent erosion have conspired.

The phenomenon that people know little about is subsidence. Sure, there is global warming to blame, but in our case, subsidence is the immediate culprit. I hope MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando knows the word.

Subsidence is the "lowering of entire regional surfaces due to natural compaction, enhanced compaction and tectonic movements." In the case of the places in the study, local subsidence is occurring 10 times faster than the sea level rise (caused by global warming). To say it plainly, parts of Camanava and the three provinces are sinking.

Some indicators of subsidence: 1) rain flood and high tides recede more slowly; 2) some living species that prefer brackish water, such as nipa palms, may advance slowly upstream over the years; 3) soils may become salty and unproductive; 4) wells or water pumps may appear to rise slowly out of the ground; and 5) surveying benchmarks may be found to have become lower since they were established.

When people pump up water faster than it could be replaced, the aquifer which is a mix of sand and gravel becomes packed. Land is compacted. It becomes prone to floods, as in the case of the three provinces mentioned.

Dikes are not always the solution to flooding, the scientists say. They are costly and simply pass the problem on downstream and damage floodplain dynamics and ecology. Diked channels starve the adjacent areas of the silt that would build them up.

The estimated P2- to P4-billion loan from Japan for Camanava flood control is supposed to give rise to a complex of polders, river walls, flood-control gates and pumps. One of the features is an 8-km polder or sea wall with a 15- to 20-meter foundation beneath the ground surface.

Dredging is not the ultimate solution either. Its benefits are short-lived because of siltation. The reason is that rivers cease to flow upon reaching the sea. In low, flat, coastal areas, channels are not only ineffective, they may even bring in salt water to the inland during high tides.

The verdict: With the high subsidence rate along the proposed route of the Third River Channel Project in Pampanga, this costly flood-control project will not work.

Reforestation is a key. The trees delay the rainwater that drains from the land to the streams. They give the water time to seep into the ground. Trees reduce soil erosion, thus also reducing siltation in lowland channels.

Water channels, such as esteros and rivers, have to be restored. Illegally widened fishponds have choked the channels. Fishpond dikes (*pilapil*) are continually being raised against the "rising" sea, preventing the rain floods from draining into the sea.

But reforestation cannot be done on a town-by-town or province-by-province basis because parts of the watershed that drains into the delta plain also lie in adjacent places. Serious reforestation must be done on a national scale.

One solution is regulation—of well drilling, volumes extracted, control valves for free-flowing wells and proper spacing of pumps/wells. Limiting the number of wells operated by local governments can reduce waste waters and ground subsidence.

There is so much surface water that goes to waste because there are no reservoirs. There is over-dependence on ground water. We should learn from 2001 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for Community Leadership Rajendra Singh who has made arid places in India bloom again by bringing back traditional community reservoirs.

During the El Niño season in the late 1990s, the Department of Agriculture did something like this in pilot areas. This did not take off to become a nationwide endeavor. Why?

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Human face

YOUNG BLOOD

Oliver Samson

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THERE is the saying that one's experiences in life are his most effective teachers. Fritz, an activist in his early 30s, says that the greatest are the most cruel and torturous ones.

Fritz was the student council president of the high school where he studied. Soon after graduating at age 16, he formed an organization aimed at unifying the youth and getting them involved in issues. Though most of its members were about his age, he was also able to recruit older people, the oldest of whom was 27.

The kid was not kidding. Critics and authorities took his group seriously, either afraid of its objective to fight corruption or suspecting it of subversive intentions. They couldn't believe that a kid could have done it all. They thought the New People's Army was behind him. So government troopers detained the members of his group.

Fritz was in Manila visiting his mother when the troopers rounded up his group. As soon as he heard the news, he rushed back home.

The arresting troops said documents belonging to his group had been found during a raid on a rebel camp.

That was a lie, Fritz said, pointing out that the only document his group had produced thus far was its constitution of which there were only two copies, both still in their possession.

When he went to see the members who were being detained, he got a very cold reception. They felt that he had deceived them.

Army officials put him on the hot seat. They asked him to recite the group's constitution. But although he was one of its authors, he couldn't do it word for word.

One Army officer asked him if he wasn't one of the commanders of the NPA unit operating in the area and demanded that he tell them who were the other members. Fritz dismissed the questions with a look of annoyance.

Fritz was tough. The Army had no evidence to link him and his group with the rebels. After three days, everyone was released from detention. But the damage had been done. The group carried the stigma of leftist radicalism.

The lieutenant who interrogated Fritz warned him to stay away from activists when he went to college. His friends were ordered by their parents to keep away from him. His group became inactive but his friends kept their faith in him.

The kid was deeply hurt! His heart was still a child's and his aims were without guile. He was not a subversive. He was simply prematurely aware of the inequities in the system and wanted to change them.

When he went to college, Fritz joined the very group the lieutenant had warned him to avoid mainly out of curiosity. Back in his hometown he was also considered a rebel anyway.

He became an activist, and found the purpose of his life. It was a life that did not end with going to Mendiola and denouncing the government.

Now he is back in his hometown of about 30,000 people. It is a place that has been bypassed by development and government by leaders who bought their way to public office. Its people have many reasons to be bitter, but they are voiceless and afraid to complain in public.

"Why don't you run for office now that you're here?" a former classmate who works for a bank in Makati challenged Fritz once.

"I won't win," he said. "I don't have the money. No one makes it here without resorting to vote buying."

"Ah, then educate our town mates," suggested his classmate.

"You are right!" Fritz told him.

Fritz doesn't blame his town mates for the kind of leaders they have. But he knows they are not living in the kind of society that they deserve. For him, everyone is a victim of their collective indifference.

His vision is to help them see the concrete conditions in which they live, unify them and get them involved in finding solutions to their own problems.

"That's not impossible," he says. "The folks by themselves will get aroused, united and involved. Maybe not in our time, but in the future."

Fritz, who never became a Marxist, is organizing again a group that will work for peace and justice. He farms and does some freelance writing to earn a living. His friends still support him. Even those who hated him before are marching to his beat. He has won acceptance after choosing a life that embraces others.

We mocked him when he talked about his cause, then we criticized the system. We spurned his offer to help bring us together, then we complained about how our division was hindering progress. We denounced him when he took our complaints to the streets, then we bewailed our sad condition.

In our society where a person's worth is measured by how much he makes, how luxuriously he lives and how high the position he occupies, we dismissed Fritz as some kind of a fool bidding for a place in history. And yet he has always dealt with others in ways that showed his human face.

Oliver Samson, 28, is organizing a peace and justice group in his hometown in Sorsogon.

THEY SAID

Books

"I think books are very exciting. Movies are great, I admit that, but books take you away in your imagination. You feel like you have gone back in time."

—11-year-old Rory Brooks, one of millions who bought the latest Harry Potter book

Consequences of war

"The evacuation centers are the most blatant consequences of the un-peace in Mindanao, and behind the numbers and statistics are faces and unique lives."

—Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman

Born to be king

"All these questions about 'Do you want to be king?' It's not a question of wanting to be, it's something I was born into and it's my duty."

—Prince William

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RP has moved from fair to execrable

I FULLY agree with Isagani A. Cruz's "Acquittal in absentia" and your editorial "The test" last July 6.

I am a foreigner, a former chief executive of a multinational corporation and a permanent resident here with my Filipino wife and children. For years I have observed with dismay, pity and compassion how this country and its poor have gone from fair to no good to bad to execrable.

In the mid 1990s, the Thai baht and the peso were on par at 25 to a dollar. Now the dollar is worth 43 bahts and P53. Still, the oligarchs claim they cannot compete if wages and salaries of their workers are increased to match inflation. Miraculously these same oligarchs are making more profits than ever before.

It was never easy to trust the Philippine government and institutions. Now, in addition one cannot take their promises seriously anymore. They have an international reputation that is constantly getting worse. The fierce opposition to the demands of the Financial Action Task Force concerning money laundering is symptomatic.

Foreign investments are drying up because there is no legal system that protects the investor from being screwed by national or local institutions. To succeed, one has to join up with the oligarchs, who keep foreign competition out and in fact, rule the government.

The Marcoses, Estrada et al. have allegedly amassed billions in ill-gotten wealth. While the government's efforts to recover the money are stalled in the courts, people die in droves because they cannot afford to buy medicines.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue, Customs and the Land Transportation Office head the list of corrupt agencies but very few of its officials are investigated. No one ever goes to jail or has to make restitution. Criminals escape at will. Lawmakers are not interested in changing the laws that allow such scandals to proliferate. Strange.

Colleges produce graduates by the thousands. The poor kids later find out that they do not meet professional standards (only 15 to 20 percent pass the tests). The rich send their kids abroad to study.

Drug lords never get caught, except for the foreigners. Those who get caught post bail and walk away to escape prosecution. Ditto for *jueteng* lords, etc.

The big fortunes are probably already abroad: The gap between the rich and the poor gets wider every day. No one seems to realize or care about its consequences: revolt, revolution, uprisings, like what happened in France in 1789 and in Russia in 1918.

I hope that someday the poor Pinoys will have a government and institutions that really serve the people.

—NAME WITHHELD UPON REQUEST

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Lina and Ebdane should resign

THE ESCAPE of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, a prime suspect in the Rizal Day bombing, from Camp Crame is a big black eye and setback to the government's war on terrorism. It seems that Al-Ghozi and two Abu Sayyaf comrades just walked away from their detention cell gate without being noticed by jail guards.

This is not the first time that high-profile detainees escaped Camp Crame's highly secure detention area. How could they have escaped or did insiders let them escape?

Interior Secretary Jose Lina and PNP Chief Hermogenes Ebdane should resign from their sensitive posts for not immediately informing President Macapagal-Arroyo about the escape of Al-Ghozi. Why did they withhold this information for several hours?

Jemaah Islamiyah operative Al-Ghozi is considered a national security risk and threat to peace loving citizens of the world.

—FRED AMORES,
646 Undajon Dr.,
San Jose, California,
95133 USA

PNP-IG
STAINE

Manila street needs remake

PEDRO Gil is one of Manila's busiest streets in the tourist belt area of Malate. It is also one of the areas most frequented by commuters and pedestrians alike because of its newly built hotels, restaurants and a new mall catering to people from all walks of life.

However, the Taft Avenue to Roxas Boulevard portion of Pedro Gil needs a lot of improvement. Unrepaired and uneven sidewalks, piles of trash on both sides of the streets, unlighted sidewalks making it dangerous for pedestrians at night, street urchins, ambulant vendors, etc. are but some of the eyesores and ills plaguing this street.

With the on-going improvements under the "Buhayin ang Maynila" program of Mayor Lito Atienza, the sad condition of this street should be given top priority by the administration.

—PEDRO REFUERZO JR.,
6737 Taylo St., Makati City

Rotten attitude toward gov't projects

I AM writing to express my disgust over the cavalier attitude displayed by some of our public officials in the disposition of public funds, as indicated in the June 28 story of the INQUIRER, entitled "Not my fault, says ports chief."

As a taxpayer, I find it revolting that General Manager Alfonso Cusi of the Philippine Ports Authority could just wash his hands on a P230-million port project that could collapse anytime.

Not being at the project site all the time is no excuse for a lousy, if not anomalous, work. With sinking ports like that in Culasi, how can we patronize the President's much publicized Roll-on, Roll-off campaign?

With people like Cusi overseeing the building of ports, I will never take any Ro-Ro trip, lest I expose my family to the risk of being there when a port sinks.

With Cusi's reckless attitude toward defective ports, I wonder how many such ports he has approved with his eyes closed.

As the caretaker of millions in government funds, is it not Cusi's responsibility to reject outright or delay the approval of defective projects? Would it not be better if he had those projects investigated first and the defects fixed?

With officials like Cusi, the principle of command responsibility has no meaning.

For displaying such an irresponsible attitude toward a costly government project, Cusi ought to be dismissed, if only to prevent the President's Ro-Ro project from sinking like the defective port of Culasi.

—RODRIGO M. MACASAMBONG,
Quezon City

Permit for rally denied for unknown reasons

THE INQUIRER last July 10, 2003 published a news report entitled "Boracay resort says rally illegal," which quoted Benjamin Banzon, manager of Club Panoly (the proposed site of the casino), as saying that the prayer rally was illegal since it lacked a permit. I would like to shed light on this matter since I was there.

Fr. Sauro David, pastor of the Holy Rosary Parish, applied for a permit with the barangay captain, but his request was denied for reasons which were never made clear. On the morning of July 5, two other barangay captains of Boracay joined the rally since they had earlier signed a joint barangay resolution opposing the putting up of the casino. The barangay captain of Yapak where Club Panoly is situated did not come although he was supposed to have supported the joint resolution.

I was at the site of the prayer rally before it started until the culmination activity, a Mass at past 8 a.m. on Sunday. We stayed in a private lot beside the resort. People sang religious songs and prayed the Rosary. Why did the manager describe the prayer as "noise"? I have been to Boracay several times and heard loud disco music and various sounds from different bars, but I didn't hear any guests saying it's noisy there! To think, this goes on up to early in the morning.

During the overnight prayer rally, police were in the vicinity and they joined us for a cup of coffee. I heard they were deployed by the resort's management.

During the homily of Father David, rain poured and everyone present at the Mass witnessed the murky and awful smell of water coming out from Club Panoly's drainage system. I hope the resort is now fixing this problem because waste is hazardous to the health of its guests, employees and its neighbors who have already brought this matter to the attention of the sanitary inspector.

—BLAS S. DESCALLAR,
CBCP-ECIP
470 Gen. Luna St.,
Intramuros Manila

First National Artist given posthumously

WE must point out some errors in the column of Neal H. Cruz on the National Artist awards last June 27 and July 4.

Cruz asked, "Is H. R. Ocampo already a National Artist? To many, his abstract paintings are better and more sought after than those of Joya."

It seems that Cruz is the only one in this country who does not know that Ocampo was posthumously named a National Artist for Visual Arts in 1991.

Cruz also questioned the giving of the award to dead artists. He probably does not know that the very first National Artist award in 1972 was given to Fernando Amorsolo, posthumously. Cruz apparently shares the lack of information of painter Malang, whom he quoted as saying that "the dead are being resurrected."

The National Artist Awards have always "resurrected the dead." Since its inception.

Cruz said that the National Artist Award "is not a presidential award." Apparently he has not read Proclamation No. 1001 (1972), Proclamation No. 1144 (1973), and Presidential Decree No. 208 (1973), the legal documents that created the award. Very clearly, it is the President of the Philippines who determines who should get the award and who should not. What the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts do is merely recommendatory and not final. The law creating the NCCA clearly states its role is to advise the president in giving the awards. In other words, the final judge is still the president.

—BERNARD MACINAS,
associate professor,
National College
of Business and Arts,
Quezon City

Why the rush to change the Charter?

THE COALITION for Charter Change is very persistent. An article in the INQUIRER last July 13 said, "Survey says 42% of Metro respondents favor Cha-cha," implying that the move is gaining ground. Even Rep. Eduardo Nachura noted its "meteoric rise" as SWS described the latest figures as a "fast rise."

So what? While the convener of the Coalition for Charter Change is convinced that "amendments to the Constitution must take place as soon as possible," the survey failed to convince me about the urgency of this matter. One can only wonder what deals are brewing in Congress in support of this undertaking.

The bottom line is this: The reasons being cited for Charter change have not yet been fully discussed. In a paid ad on Independence day, Vice President Teofisto Guingona sounded the alarm that certain countries were interested in striking out the 60-40 provision (on ownership of vital industries) in the Constitution. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the reasons behind Charter change may not conform with the national interest.

Why is the Coalition for Charter Change in such a hurry? Shall we allow foreigners to own 100 percent of the land while leaving Filipinos as squatters in their own country? Do we squander our vast marine resources by allowing foreign vessels free access to supposedly exclusive economic zones? And do we entrust our nation's food security to another country we don't even know?

Until these questions are answered, it is proper to shelve this idea for the time being since we have other more pressing problems to attend to.

I urge concerned Filipinos to go over the Constitution or at least read Section 12 on the National Economy and Patrimony.

—EPHRAIM PATRICK T. BATUNGBACAL,
91 V. Luna Sikatuna Village,
Quezon City

Presidential timber and others

WITH SINCERE apologies to the great "Arsenic" Lacson who was a towering presidential timber during his time, here is my unabashed classification of the present crop of presidential aspirants:

Roco: presidential timber
Lacson: presidential lumber
Cojuangco: presidential firewood
Guingona: presidential driftwood
De Castro: presidential toothpick.

—BENJAMIN A. BONGOLAN,
San Jose, Urdaneta,
Pangasinan

Reviving pharmacy

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WORDS are powerful, and this could not be better exemplified than by the controversy over a single word being used in Senate Bill 1900, "An Act Regulating the Education and Licensure of Physicians and Their Practice of Medicine in the Philippines and for Other Purposes."

The bill revises the older Medical Act and now defines the physician's roles to include the following: "to diagnose, treat, operate or prescribe and dispense any remedy for any human disease, injury, deformity, physical or mental condition."

Sounds fine. Unless you're a pharmacist, and you notice the word "dispense." The Philippine Pharmaceutical Association, a nationwide organization of pharmacists, has issued a strong statement opposing the inclusion of this function among a physician's functions. Under current laws, there's a very clear distinction about what professionals can do in relation to medicines: prescribing is limited to physicians and dispensing to pharmacists.

We tend to think of pharmacists mainly as people who sell medicines. You go to a drugstore and assume all the people behind the counter are pharmacists. Actually, most of them are sales clerks, with some training on medicines. What the law requires is that there be at least one licensed pharmacist supervising the sales clerks.

The dispensing of drugs involves more than just selling the products. Dispensing includes a careful check of the prescription, to make sure the right drug is given. We all know about *malgraphicus medicus*, the bad handwriting of physicians that can be confusing. The physician may have prescribed Losec, an anti-ulcer drug, but careless dispensing could mean Lasix being given to the patient, which makes a world of a difference because Lasix is a drug to induce urination.

A trained pharmacist looks out for these differences and more. The pharmacist is also expected to advise the patient on the proper use of the drugs, not just how much to take but when to take them. Even simple advice like taking a medicine after meals is important because there are many drugs that should not be taken on an empty stomach because they can irritate the stomach or intestines. (Examples are aspirin, and pain-killers like ibuprofen, found in Alaxan and many other brand-name preparations.)

A pharmacist is also expected to check a physician's prescription to make sure the medicines do not conflict with, or duplicate each other. In hospitals, pharmacists will even advise the nutritionists and food preparers about avoiding certain foods that could affect the medicines.

Most importantly, dispensing is about people. A pharmacist is there to make sure the medicines are appropriate to the patient, taking into consideration the person's illness, age, sex, even socioeconomic background, as we will see in a while.

All these responsibilities are part of dispensing, a function that is reserved, in most countries, for pharmacists.

There are two main reasons for this specific division of labor:

First, pharmacists are trained to handle medicines, all through the four years of college, and, for others, several more years of postgraduate work. Older readers will remember how pharmacists used to compound the drugs, mixing different ingredients to make a particular medicine. That is no longer done today, but in principle, a well-trained pharmacist still knows what ingredients go into each product. Physicians are also trained in drugs but this is limited to a few courses in pharmacology since they have to take many other subjects.

The second reason why dispensing is reserved for pharmacists is to avoid a conflict of interest. If a physician is allowed to prescribe and to dispense drugs, you can imagine him prescribing more drugs because that would mean the patient will be purchasing more drugs from the physician as well. The temptation isn't just to prescribe more drugs, but the most expensive ones.

In the real world, of course, there are many ways of getting around this division of prescribing and dispensing roles. Many physicians, especially in rural areas, simply set up a pharmacy next to their clinic, with the pharmacy run by a relative. Then, too, there are pharmacists who sometimes succumb to the promotions of drug companies to promote particular brands. Nevertheless, a legal separation of the two functions is still important, at least to give patients some protection.

Pharmacists are upset with the proposed new Medical Act because it further infringes on a profession that is already greatly weakened. The old function of compounding medicines has been taken over by large drug companies. Even the selling of drugs has gradually been taken over by large chains like Mercury, so independent pharmacists are rapidly disappearing.

Pharmacists remain in great demand in Western countries. There is, in fact, a less known brain drain going on as our pharmacists leave for countries where they're better appreciated. In other countries' hospitals and pharmacies, pharmacists continue to play major roles, checking on all prescriptions and advising patients. Recognizing that pharmacists are often the first health professionals to be consulted by someone who is sick, some Western countries have even modified laws to allow pharmacists to take on a semi-prescribing role, for example to advise someone on family planning options.

My pharmacist friends say there shouldn't be any competition between physicians and pharmacists. It's all a matter of fairness to all concerned, health professionals as well as patients. A physician is busy enough handling all kinds of other responsibilities so the minute details of dispensing medicines should be left to pharmacists. If anything, we should be reviving pharmacy rather than further weakening the profession.

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Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Another GI killed; deaths tie toll in 1991 Gulf War

ABU GHRAIB, Iraq—An explosion killed a US soldier in Iraq on Wednesday, bringing the death toll of servicemen killed in combat since the US-led invasion to 147, equaling the total of American fatalities in the 1991 Gulf War.

A military convoy driving on a highway near Abu Ghraib, 25 km west of Baghdad, was hit by an explosion that badly damaged a military truck and left two other soldiers wounded, US soldiers on the scene said.

"We were driving by in a convoy and we heard a big explosion. As the convoy passed that truck over there blew up," Specialist Jose Colon said.

"One of the men who was injured was angry so he jumped out of the truck and started firing on those bushes. He is lucky because he almost died the other day as well in another truck explosion." An officer at the scene said the type of explosion was not clear.

The body of the dead soldier lay on the highway covered with a yellow sheet as the two wounded men received treatment.

Helicopters hovered above and US soldiers stood guard, pointing their machineguns toward the edge of the road and peering through binoculars for other possible attackers.

One soldier put his arm around another and comforted him as he cried while sitting on the barrier that divides the highway.

About 40 Iraqis walked out of their neighborhood and watched.

Their mood was different.

"We are happy because this is an occupation," said Mansour Badri, a teenager who lives in a village nearby. "The Americans lied to us when they said they would save us from Saddam. They just want to occupy our country."

Badri and his friends said Baath Party supporters had been encouraging teenagers like them to fight against Americans and had offered them money.

The blast was the latest in a spate of increasingly bold guerrilla attacks. US forces have come under daily attack in recent weeks which have continued despite a crackdown by US troops in areas to the northeast and north of the capital, once a hotbed for Saddam loyalists.

US administrator Paul Bremer said Washington and London would pull out their forces from Iraq once the coalition's mission was accomplished.

"We have no desire to stay a day longer than necessary," he told reporters in Baghdad on Tuesday.

In a bid to prepare the ground to punish members of Saddam's government, Iraq's new US-backed Governing Council agreed to set up a war crimes tribunal. Thirty-four people on a US list of 55 most-wanted Iraqis are either dead or in the hands of US and British forces. *Reuters*

Dems step up attacks on Bush over Iraq intel

WASHINGTON—Democrats sharpened their attacks on the George W. Bush administration Tuesday, emboldened by persistent questions over prewar intelligence on Iraq's pursuit of nuclear, biological and chemical arms.

US Central Intelligence Agency director George Tenet has taken the blame for President George W. Bush's January claim that Iraq had tried to buy nuclear material from Africa.

In a surprise statement last week, Tenet said the reference—based on information from Britain—should not have been included in the president's Jan. 28 State of the Union address because it had not been corroborated by US intelligence.

The White House has said that as far as they are concerned, the issue is over and done with, but Democrats refused to let the matter die, with the party's biggest guns taking to the floor of the Senate, holding news conferences, and taking to the airwaves to keep the controversy alive.

One leading Democrat accused the White House of a broad pattern of dissemblance in making its case for waging war on Iraq.

"The misleading statement about African uranium is not an isolated incident. There is a significant amount of troubling evidence that it was part of a pattern of exaggerations and misleading statements," Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan said on the floor of the US Senate.

"It was not inadvertent. It was not a slip... It was calculated. It was misleading."

Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy, one of the most senior Democrats in Congress, decried what he called a "bankrupt" US policy toward Iraq, which revealed "flawed, distorted and failed intelligence," Kennedy told NBC television.

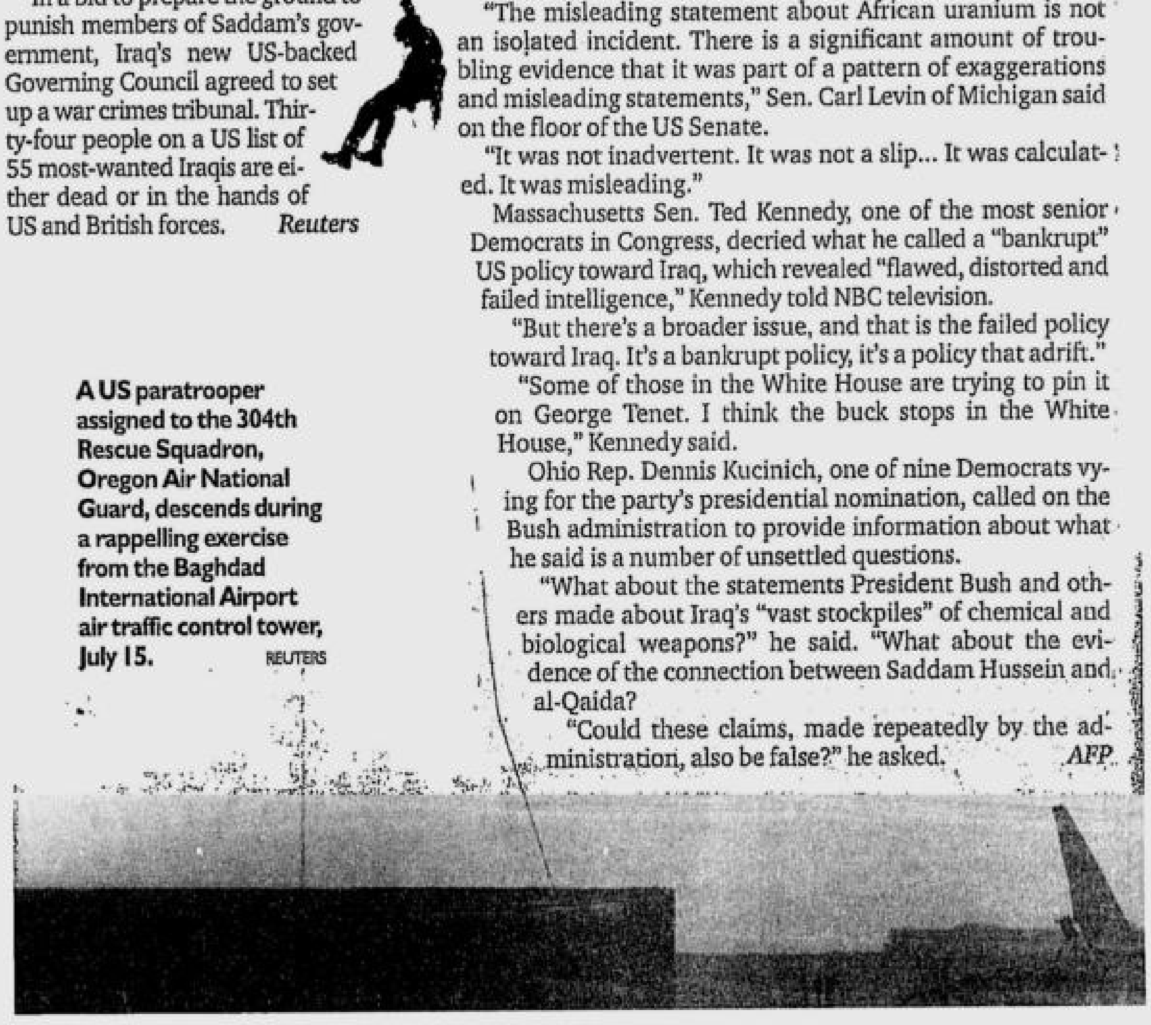
"But there's a broader issue, and that is the failed policy toward Iraq. It's a bankrupt policy, it's a policy that adrift."

"Some of those in the White House are trying to pin it on George Tenet. I think the buck stops in the White House," Kennedy said.

Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich, one of nine Democrats vying for the party's presidential nomination, called on the Bush administration to provide information about what he said is a number of unsettled questions.

"What about the statements President Bush and others made about Iraq's "vast stockpiles" of chemical and biological weapons?" he said. "What about the evidence of the connection between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida?

"Could these claims, made repeatedly by the administration, also be false?" he asked. *AFP*



A US paratrooper assigned to the 304th Rescue Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, descends during a rappelling exercise from the Baghdad International Airport air traffic control tower, July 15. REUTERS

Iraq war has cost US $48B so far

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department said on Tuesday military expenses for the Iraq war and its aftermath have cost the United States $48 billion to date, with a monthly price tag over the next couple of months estimated at more than $3.9 billion.

Undersecretary of Defense Dov Zakheim, the Pentagon's comptroller, has determined that the actual combat phase of the war, from March 20 to May 1, cost roughly $5 billion, according to a defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official said Zakheim estimates that the buildup to the war—moving troops, equipment and weapons into the region and setting up facilities there—cost about $30 billion before a single shot was fired.

The official said the Defense Department has forecast monthly costs of the current postwar stabilization effort at between $3.9 billion $4 billion through the end of the US fiscal year on Sept. 30.

"That may go up or go down, depending on what happens—the more reservists who are demobilized, the more people who come home, all kinds of variables," the official said.

Zakheim expects the costs of the campaign to reach about $58 billion by the end of the fiscal year, the official said.

Monthly US military costs after Sept. 30 have not been estimated, the official added, because numerous factors remain unknown, including US troop levels and the number of international peacekeeping troops who might help out in Iraq.

The United States has about 146,000 of its troops in Iraq, and US commanders have said they expect to maintain that troop level for the foreseeable future.

US forces, joined by troops from Britain and other countries, invaded Iraq in March and toppled the government of President Saddam Hussein.

The United States waged a high-tech war, with satellite-guided bombs and missiles and sophisticated warplanes devastating the Iraqi military. Baghdad fell on April 9, and US President George W. Bush declared major combat over on May 1. *Reuters*

Fears rising of confrontation with N. Korea

By Carol Giacomo

WASHINGTON—The crisis over North Korea's nuclear program looks increasingly to be heating up as Washington intensifies the pressure on Pyongyang and diplomacy founders.

A flurry of recent meetings involving, in various combinations, the United States, China, South Korea, Japan and North Korea, suggests key players continue to search for a peaceful solution.

But the months-long effort has failed to produce a sustained negotiating process, partly because of North Korea but also because of Bush administration policy divisions, officials and experts say.

The North's communist government has moved aggressively to boost its nuclear arsenal from an estimated one or two weapons to as many as eight in the next six months.

"I think we are losing control" of the situation, former Defense Secretary William Perry told The Washington Post in Tuesday's editions.

He warned that the United States and North Korea were drifting toward a war, perhaps was early as this year in an increasingly dangerous standoff that could also result in terrorists being able to purchase a North Korean nuclear device and plant it in a US city, the newspaper reported.

As defense secretary under President Bill Clinton, Perry oversaw the preparation of air strikes on the North's nuclear facilities in 1994, but an attack was never carried out because the program was frozen under a Washington-Pyongyang deal that unraveled last October.

Perry also crafted a two-pronged negotiating strategy for Clinton that offered political and economic benefits if the North abandoned its nuclear and missile programs, but promised isolation and possibly tougher action if it did not.

Bush administration hard-liners never liked that approach, which included building Pyongyang a $5 billion nuclear power project, because they said it rewarded a ruthless government that cannot be trusted.

Their views became even firmer after Pyongyang told US officials last October it had a second, covert nuclear program, expelled UN weapons inspectors and withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—signs of a growing determination to engage in full-scale nuclear weapons production.

In the latest ominous twist, North Korea told the United States last week it completed reprocessing 8,000 spent fuel rods into bomb-grade plutonium, which could quickly add another half-dozen weapons to Pyongyang's one- or two-bomb cache.

While calling it a "serious matter," US officials on Tuesday tried to play down the development, which experts have long warned Washington must not allow to happen.

"It would be a mistake to impart to North Korea's leadership the notion that America is in a panic about this," said Nicholas Eberstadt of the American Enterprise Institute, who generally supports the administration on North Korea.

He said the international community was in a "race against time" with North Korea, faulted the administration for prolonged division and paralysis on the issue and urged the formation of "an effective policy as soon as possible." *Reuters*

US study links animal fats to breast cancer

WASHINGTON—Young women who eat more red meat and full-fat dairy products such as cheese may be raising their risk of breast cancer, researchers reported on Tuesday.

They said their study, published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, provides yet another incentive for women to shun fatty foods and consume fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

"When we compared the women in the highest fat intake group with women in lowest intake group, those with the highest intake had a 33 percent greater risk of invasive breast cancer," Eunyoung Cho of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School said in a telephone interview.

Cho said her study was unique because it included women who had not reached menopause. Breast cancer takes years to develop, although it usually shows up after menopause, and factors early in a woman's life may be important.

Women most at risk of breast cancer obtained, on average, 23 percent of calories from animal fat, versus 12 percent in the lowest-risk group.

Vegetable fats such as olive oil did not affect a woman's risk. "We found that it was not total fat but certain types of fat that was related to breast cancer risk," Cho said.

The study of more than 90,000 women aged 26 to 46 was taken from the Nurses' Health Study, in which volunteers answer regular questionnaires about diet and lifestyle and that data is analyzed by researchers who track the women's health. *Reuters*

2 Cuba boats hijacked; 3 killed

HAVANA—A Cuban surveying boat was hijacked on Tuesday and at least 10 people sailed to the Bahamas, a day after three hijackers died in a shooting during an attempt to leave Cuba on a fishing boat, officials said.

The hijackings were the first reported since Communist-run Cuba executed three men in April for seizing a Havana Bay ferry in a failed bid to reach the United States.

A boat belonging to the state marine surveying company GeoCuba was hijacked in the port of Nuevitas, on the north coast of the central Cuban province of Camaguey, and left at 3:50 a.m., a government statement said.

A Cuban border patrol boat followed the vessel until it entered Bahamian waters and reported that seven men were on the deck and about 20 people inside. Cuba asked the Bahamas to return the boat and its hijackers.

A spokesperson for the Bahamian Foreign Affairs Ministry said the twin-engined Cuban boat was believed to have 10 to 15 people on board and 200 gallons of fuel. *Reuters*

NOT YOUR USUAL LONDON WEATHER

Darlhing Moreira, a language student from Chile, cools off in the fountain outside Buckingham Palace in London, July 15, where temperatures soared to their highest this year. AP

Sao Tome military mounts coup

LISBON—The military in the tiny west African island nation of Sao Tome and Principe launched a coup early Wednesday in the former Portuguese colony, taking advantage of the president's absence on a foreign trip.

Citing its own correspondent in the oil-rich archipelago, the Lusa news agency said that Prime Minister Maria das Neves, Parliament president Dionisio Dias and the minister of defense had all been detained in the coup.

Speaking to Portuguese public radio, Lisbon's ambassador in Sao Tome confirmed the coup and the detentions, but said the situation was relatively calm.

"Certain key points in the city have been captured and members of the government have been detained, but the situation is relatively calm," said ambassador Mario de Jesus Santos,

"We heard sporadic shots when the detentions happened... but we don't know of any physical confrontations," he added.

Sao Tome President Fradique Bandeira de Menezes is currently in Nigeria on a private visit, where he has been since Tuesday. *AFP*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Another GI killed; deaths tie toll in 1991 Gulf War

ABU GHRAIB, Iraq—An explosion killed a US soldier in Iraq on Wednesday, bringing the death toll of servicemen killed in combat since the US-led invasion to 147, equaling the total of American fatalities in the 1991 Gulf War.

A military convoy driving on a highway near Abu Ghraib, 25 km west of Baghdad, was hit by an explosion that badly damaged a military truck and left two other soldiers wounded, US soldiers on the scene said.

"We were driving by in a convoy and we heard a big explosion. As the convoy passed that truck over there blew up," Specialist Jose Colon said.

"One of the men who was injured was angry so he jumped out of the truck and started firing on those bushes. He is lucky because he almost died the other day as well in another truck explosion." An officer at the scene said the type of explosion was not clear.

The body of the dead soldier lay on the highway covered with a yellow sheet as the two wounded men received treatment.

Helicopters hovered above and US soldiers stood guard, pointing their machineguns toward the edge of the road and peering through binoculars for other possible attackers.

One soldier put his arm around another and comforted him as he cried while sitting on the barrier that divides the highway.

About 40 Iraqis walked out of their neighborhood and watched.

Their mood was different.

"We are happy because this is an occupation," said Mansour Badri, a teenager who lives in a village nearby. "The Americans lied to us when they said they would save us from Saddam. They just want to occupy our country."

Badri and his friends said Baath Party supporters had been encouraging teenagers like them to fight against Americans and had offered them money.

The blast was the latest in a spate of increasingly bold guerrilla attacks. US forces have come under daily attack in recent weeks which have continued despite a crackdown by US troops in areas to the northeast and north of the capital, once a hotbed for Saddam loyalists.

US administrator Paul Bremer said Washington and London would pull out their forces from Iraq once the coalition's mission was accomplished.

"We have no desire to stay a day longer than necessary," he told reporters in Baghdad on Tuesday.

In a bid to prepare the ground to punish members of Saddam's government, Iraq's new US-backed Governing Council agreed to set up a war crimes tribunal. Thirty-four people on a US list of 55 most-wanted Iraqis are either dead or in the hands of US and British forces. *Reuters*

Dems step up attacks on Bush over Iraq intel

WASHINGTON—Democrats sharpened their attacks on the George W. Bush administration Tuesday, emboldened by persistent questions over prewar intelligence on Iraq's pursuit of nuclear, biological and chemical arms.

US Central Intelligence Agency director George Tenet has taken the blame for President George W. Bush's January claim that Iraq had tried to buy nuclear material from Africa.

In a surprise statement last week, Tenet said the reference—based on information from Britain—should not have been included in the president's Jan. 28 State of the Union address because it had not been corroborated by US intelligence.

The White House has said that as far as they are concerned, the issue is over and done with, but Democrats refused to let the matter die, with the party's biggest guns taking to the floor of the Senate, holding news conferences, and taking to the airwaves to keep the controversy alive.

One leading Democrat accused the White House of a broad pattern of dissemblance in making its case for waging war on Iraq.

"The misleading statement about African uranium is not an isolated incident. There is a significant amount of troubling evidence that it was part of a pattern of exaggerations and misleading statements," Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan said on the floor of the US Senate.

"It was not inadvertent. It was not a slip... It was calculated. It was misleading."

Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy, one of the most senior Democrats in Congress, decried what he called a "bankrupt" US policy toward Iraq, which revealed "flawed, distorted and failed intelligence," Kennedy told NBC television.

"But there's a broader issue, and that is the failed policy toward Iraq. It's a bankrupt policy, it's a policy that adrift."

"Some of those in the White House are trying to pin it on George Tenet. I think the buck stops in the White House," Kennedy said.

Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich, one of nine Democrats vying for the party's presidential nomination, called on the Bush administration to provide information about what he said is a number of unsettled questions.

"What about the statements President Bush and others made about Iraq's "vast stockpiles" of chemical and biological weapons?" he said. "What about the evidence of the connection between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaida?

"Could these claims, made repeatedly by the administration, also be false?" he asked. *AFP*

Iraq war has cost US $48B so far

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department said on Tuesday military expenses for the Iraq war and its aftermath have cost the United States $48 billion to date, with a monthly price tag over the next couple of months estimated at more than $3.9 billion.

Undersecretary of Defense Dov Zakheim, the Pentagon's comptroller, has determined that the actual combat phase of the war, from March 20 to May 1, cost roughly $5 billion, according to a defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official said Zakheim estimates that the buildup to the war—moving troops, equipment and weapons into the region and setting up facilities there—cost about $30 billion before a single shot was fired.

The official said the Defense Department has forecast monthly costs of the current postwar stabilization effort at between $3.9 billion $4 billion through the end of the US fiscal year on Sept. 30.

"That may go up or go down, depending on what happens—the more reservists who are demobilized, the more people who come home, all kinds of variables," the official said.

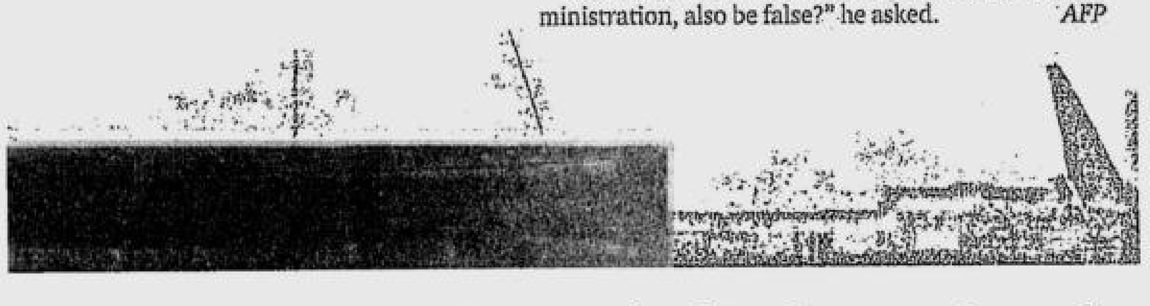
Zakheim expects the costs of the campaign to reach about $58 billion by the end of the fiscal year, the official said.

Monthly US military costs after Sept. 30 have not been estimated, the official added, because numerous factors remain unknown, including US troop levels and the number of international peacekeeping troops who might help out in Iraq.

The United States has about 146,000 of its troops in Iraq, and US commanders have said they expect to maintain that troop level for the foreseeable future.

US forces, joined by troops from Britain and other countries, invaded Iraq in March and toppled the government of President Saddam Hussein.

The United States waged a high-tech war, with satellite-guided bombs and missiles and sophisticated warplanes devastating the Iraqi military. Baghdad fell on April 9, and US President George W. Bush declared major combat over on May 1. *Reuters*



A US paratrooper assigned to the 304th Rescue Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, descends during a rappelling exercise from the Baghdad International Airport air traffic control tower, July 15. REUTERS

Fears rising of confrontation with N. Korea

By Carol Giacomo

WASHINGTON—The crisis over North Korea's nuclear program looks increasingly to be heating up as Washington intensifies the pressure on Pyongyang and diplomacy founders.

A flurry of recent meetings involving, in various combinations, the United States, China, South Korea, Japan and North Korea, suggests key players continue to search for a peaceful solution.

But the months-long effort has failed to produce a sustained negotiating process, partly because of North Korea but also because of Bush administration policy divisions, officials and experts say.

The North's communist government has moved aggressively to boost its nuclear arsenal from an estimated one or two weapons to as many as eight in the next six months.

"I think we are losing control" of the situation, former Defense Secretary William Perry told The Washington Post in Tuesday's editions.

He warned that the United States and North Korea were drifting toward a war, perhaps was early as this year in an increasingly dangerous standoff that could also result in terrorists being able to purchase a North Korean nuclear device and plant it in a US city, the newspaper reported.

As defense secretary under President Bill Clinton, Perry oversaw the preparation of air strikes on the North's nuclear facilities in 1994, but an attack was never carried out because the program was frozen under a Washington-Pyongyang deal that unraveled last October.

Perry also crafted a two-pronged negotiating strategy for Clinton that offered political and economic benefits if the North abandoned its nuclear and missile programs, but promised isolation and possibly tougher action if it did not.

Bush administration hard-liners never liked that approach, which included building Pyongyang a $5 billion nuclear power project, because they said it rewarded a ruthless government that cannot be trusted.

Their views became even firmer after Pyongyang told US officials last October it had a second, covert nuclear program, expelled UN weapons inspectors and withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—signs of a growing determination to engage in full-scale nuclear weapons production.

In the latest ominous twist, North Korea told the United States last week it completed reprocessing 8,000 spent fuel rods into bomb-grade plutonium, which could quickly add another half-dozen weapons to Pyongyang's one- or two-bomb cache.

While calling it a "serious matter," US officials on Tuesday tried to play down the development, which experts have long warned Washington must not allow to happen.

"It would be a mistake to impart to North Korea's leadership the notion that America is in a panic about this," said Nicholas Eberstadt of the American Enterprise Institute, who generally supports the administration on North Korea.

He said the international community was in a "race against time" with North Korea, faulted the administration for prolonged division and paralysis on the issue and urged the formation of "an effective policy as soon as possible." *Reuters*

US study links animal fats to breast cancer

WASHINGTON[illegible] women who eat [illegible] fat dairy products [illegible] may be raising their [illegible] researchers reported [illegible]day.

They said the [illegible] published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, provides yet another incentive for women to shun fatty foods and consume fresh fruits vegetables and whole grains.

"When we compared the women in the highest fat intake group with women in lowest intake group, those with the highest intake had a 33 percent greater risk of invasive breast cancer," [illegible] Cho of Brigham and W[illegible] and Harvard Medica[illegible] telephone interview.

Cho said her study was unique because it included women who had not reached menopause. Breast cancer takes years to develop, [illegible] though it usually shows up after menopause, and factors early [illegible] woman's life may be important.

Women most at risk of breast cancer obtained, on average, 23 percent of calories from animal fat, versus 12 percent in the lowest-risk group.

Vegetable fats such as olive oil did not affect a woman's risk. "We found that it was not total fat but certain types of fat that was related to breast cancer risk," Cho said.

The study of more than 90,000 women aged 26 to 46 was taken from the Nurses' Health Study, in which volunteers answer regular questionnaires about diet [illegible] lifestyle and that data is analyzed by researchers who track the women's health. *Reuters*

2 Cuba boats hijacked; 3 killed

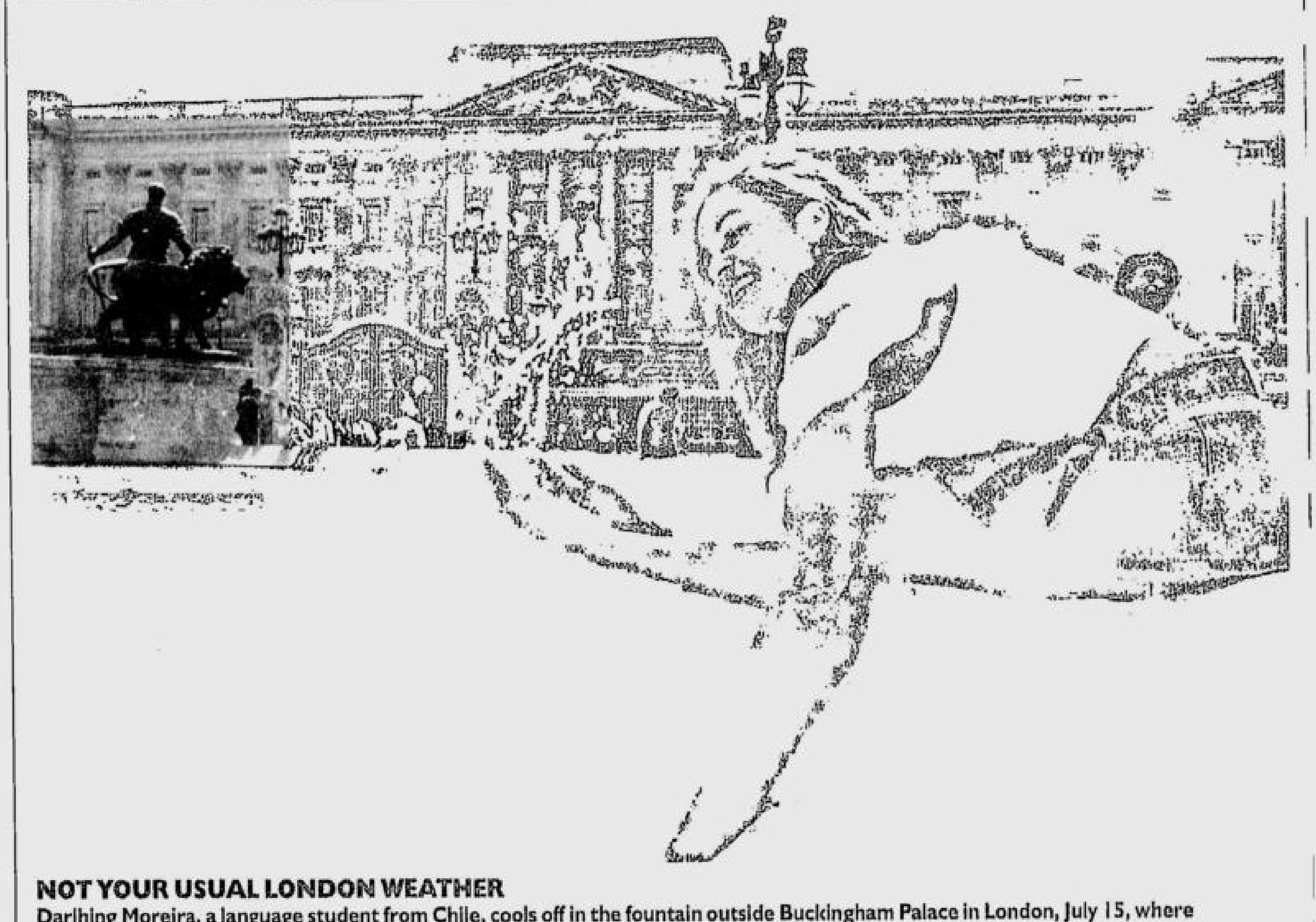
HAVANA—A Cuban surveying boat was hijacked on Tuesday and at least 10 people sailed to the Bahamas, a day after three hijackers died in a shooting during an attempt to leave Cuba on a fishing boat, officials said.

The hijackings were the first reported since Communist-run Cuba executed three men in April for seizing a Havana Bay ferry in a failed bid to reach the United States.

A boat belonging to the state marine surveying company GeoCuba was hijacked in the port of Nuevitas, on the north coast of the central Cuban province of Camaguey, and left at 3:50 a.m., a government statement said.

A Cuban border patrol boat followed the vessel until it entered Bahamian waters and reported that seven men were on the deck and about 20 people inside. Cuba asked the Bahamas to return the boat and its hijackers.

A spokesperson for the Bahamian Foreign Affairs Ministry said the twin-engined Cuban boat was believed to have 10 to 15 people on board and 200 gallons of fuel. *Reuters*



NOT YOUR USUAL LONDON WEATHER

Darlhing Moreira, a language student from Chile, cools off in the fountain outside Buckingham Palace in London, July 15, where temperatures soared to their highest this year. AP

Sao Tome military mounts coup

LISBON—The military in the tiny west African island nation of Sao Tome and Principe launched a coup early Wednesday in the former Portuguese colony, taking advantage of the president's absence on a foreign trip.

Citing its own correspondent in the oil-rich archipelago, the Lusa news agency said that Prime Minister Maria das Neves, Parliament president Dionisio Dias and the minister of defense had all been detained in the coup.

Speaking to Portuguese public radio, Lisbon's ambassador in Sao Tome confirmed the coup and the detentions, but said the situation was relatively calm.

"Certain key points in the city have been captured and members of the government have been detained, but the situation is relatively calm," said ambassador Mario de Jesus Santos.

"We heard sporadic shots when the detentions happened... but we don't know of any physical confrontations," he added.

Sao Tome President Fradique Bandeira de Menezes is currently in Nigeria on a private visit, where he has been since Tuesday. *AFP*

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5 rebs, 2 soldiers killed in Bataan clash

By Tonette Orejas and Greg Refraccion
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Five New People's Army rebels and two soldiers were killed in a clash in Dinalupihan, Bataan on Tuesday, Army reports said.

Three policemen and a soldier were also wounded in the skirmish that started at 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday's three-hour battle in Barangay Pagalanggang in Dinalupihan engaged about 80 rebels from the NPA's guerrilla front "Cases" and armed propaganda unit "Hizon," of the Bataan-Zambales provincial command led by one Ka Tayao, said Lt. Col. Preme Monta, information chief of the Army's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom).

Monta identified the slain soldiers as Army Sgts. Edgar Patay and Timothy Epad. Wounded were Sgt. Mario Isoc and PO1 Hajim Bain, PO3 Sali Suraidi and PO1 Fernando Magpayo of the Bataan police.

Senior Supt. Sahiron Salim, Bataan police director, said the slain rebels were yet to be identified by their relatives. Their bodies were taken to a funeral parlor in Dinalupihan.

The death toll on the NPA side could not be independently confirmed from NPA sources.

Monta claimed the number of casualties was based on body count.

He said soldiers from the 24th Infantry Battalion and Bataan policemen entered Pagalanggang, which the military classified as "rebel-infiltrated," after receiving reports that the rebels killed a resident, identified as Jony Aguilar. Reports said Aguilar was killed after he refused the rebels' demand for money.

Reports said Senior Insp. Rommel Velasco, Dinalupihan police chief, received a call from Rolando Buniag, barangay captain Pagalanggang, informing him that a resident had been killed by rebels in the village.

When policemen led by Salim reached the Barangay Pagalanggang road, seven rebels led by one Ka Jomar went out of a house and fired at the lawmen.

An intense firefight ensued between the rebels and the government troops. The firefight lasted until past 7 p.m.

No civilians were reported caught in the crossfire.

Soldiers reported recovering a baby Armalite, three M-16 Armalite rifles and an M-14 rifle.

Government troops pursued the rebels who retreated east of Dinalupihan on Tuesday night.

Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, Nolcom commander, warned of more clashes, saying "if we cannot kill them (through) combat operations, we will decimate them through exhaustion, thirst and hunger."

In the 30 clashes the Army reported initiating from January to June, officials claimed having killed 40 rebels and captured 40 others. At least 58 rebels surrendered and 82 firearms were seized.

Reported killed in those clashes were five soldiers and seven policemen.

In Mt. Province, eight soldiers were killed Monday, when NPA rebels ambushed them in Barangay Talubin in Bontoc town.

Army officials assailed the NPA for targetting non-combatants during the Bontoc ambush. They said the slain soldiers were on a humanitarian mission when attacked.

Third highest

This was the third highest number of casualties suffered by the military in recent weeks. At least 29 government troops were killed in separate clashes with rebels in Compostela Valley on June 30 and Eastern Samar on June 26.

In another development, Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) spokesperson, said the communist movement would rather wait for the next administration before restarting stalled talks with the government.

In an interview over dzBB Tuesday, he charged that President Macapagal-Arroyo seemed not keen on forging a final peace agreement with the rebel group, noting that she was imposing too many conditions for the resumption of talks.

"We think we have no chance that GMA will sit down in talks with us. So we'll just wait for the new President," Rosal said. "Would you believe that while (Speaker Jose) de Venecia and (Silvestre) Bello were holding talks with us, we were accused of planting marijuana? They're just giving reasons not to push through with the peace process," Rosal said.

He was referring to Ms Macapagal's recent declaration that the government would not resume negotiations with the rebels, unless they renounce their involvement in illicit drug trade. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

VILLAGE officials inspect a gaping hole in the treasure-digging site on Mt. Banahaw.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARNOLD MANZANO, TAYABAS MOUNTAINEERS

Japanese treasure hunts on Mt. Banahaw assailed

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Two separate Japanese treasure-hunting activities in Quezon's protected areas have raised concern from environmentalist groups.

The Tayabas Mountaineers found an alleged illegal treasure-hunting activity on Mt. Banahaw and urged concerned government agencies to stop the operation before it creates further destruction in the area.

Arnold Manzano, the mountaineering group's president, sought the help of the environmentalist group Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Tagalog on Tuesday and reported their discovery of the treasure hunt in Barangay Camaysa on June 29. He said their group was conducting a tree-planting in a nearby area, when they found the treasure-hunting site located on the upper slope of the mountain about 920 meters above sea level.

He said they immediately alerted the village officials. "The treasure hunt area was about 200 square meters. Big gaping holes were all over the place, some of them measuring 30 feet deep," he said.

Board member Remy Diestro also assailed the continuous treasure digging inside the Quezon National Park in Atimonan, which the official charged has been affecting motorists.

The zigzag road inside the park was closed to traffic for three days since Saturday.

Rogelio Rejano, officer in charge-district engineer of Quezon's Second Engineering District, pointed to a group led by a certain Victor Ebanes as behind the digging.

"But they have a valid permit," he said, adding that the road closure was allowed by the local government of Atimonan.

"I personally witnessed how the pointer of their detector moved wildly. But after three days of digging, the buried Japanese treasures have yet to be found," he said.

He said the cash bond of the treasure hunters would shoulder the reconstruction of the damaged portion of the road.

Manzano, on the other hand, said the diggers felled several trees in the clearing operation.

Some branches were used for tents and quarters, while others were used as reinforcement for the chain block and other digging and hauling equipment.

"We were told by the diggers that they were positive they were into something big as manifested (sic) by their scientific equipment," he said.

Manzano said the alleged leaders of the fabled Yamashita treasure hunt group identified themselves as Tony Cabiling and Dulan Ramos.

Four other workers helped in the digging.

According to Manzano, "From the terrain of the place, it looks like some diggings and burying took place in the past (sic)."

He said the group admitted that Japanese principals were financing the operation.

The diggers have no permit for the treasure hunt, he said.

Treasure diggers should secure a license from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Lawyer Asis Perez, director of Tanggol Kalikasan, said the Protected Area Management Board should investigate the mountain digging activities.

He described the situation as "ironic," in the light of the recent Presidential Proclamation No. 411 dated June 25, 2003 that declared Mt. Banahaw-San Cristobal "protected area under the category of protected landscape."

Romy Cariaga, Tayabas environment official, said Mayor Faustino Silang had ordered the police to investigate the diggings and arrest the treasure hunters if they have no valid permits.

DOJ slammed for reviving libel case against 5 journalists

By Philip C. Tubeza

A militant farmers' group slammed the Department of Justice on Tuesday for reviving a libel case against several persons—among them five journalists—filed by an agribusiness firm affiliated with Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas hit Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez for reviving Lapanday Agricultural Development Corp.'s libel charge against Pesticide Action Network Philippines president Romeo Quijano; his daughter Ilang-ilang, a reporter of Pinoy Weekly; Danilo Mariano, editor of the ABS-CBN website abscbnnews.com; Carlos Conde, correspondent of the New York Times; Leti Boniol, desk editor of the INQUIRER and Nick Legaspi, deskman of Malaya. The latter four were editors of the now-defunct Philippine Post when the article "Poisoned Lives" came out in the Post's March 6, 2000 issue.

The story alleged that Ladeco's extensive use of pesticides was poisoning Kamukhaan Village in Davao del Sur. Lapanday is reportedly owned by Lorenzo's family.

In a statement, the KMP said the DOJ decision on July 4 to revive the case was "highly suspicious," noting that the Davao City Prosecutor's Office dismissed it three years ago.

"It's harassment," said Ilang-ilang, who cowrote the article with her father, Romeo, who is also a professor at the University of the Philippines-Manila.

She said that on top of the libel case, Lapanday also filed a civil case against the Quijanos, which is still in court.

In its decision, the city prosecutor said the article was "a matter of public interest" and that it was "written in good fait, (calling) the attention of the public to the present state of health and risks of the residents (sic) of Kamukhaan, and for the goverment to take appropriate action."

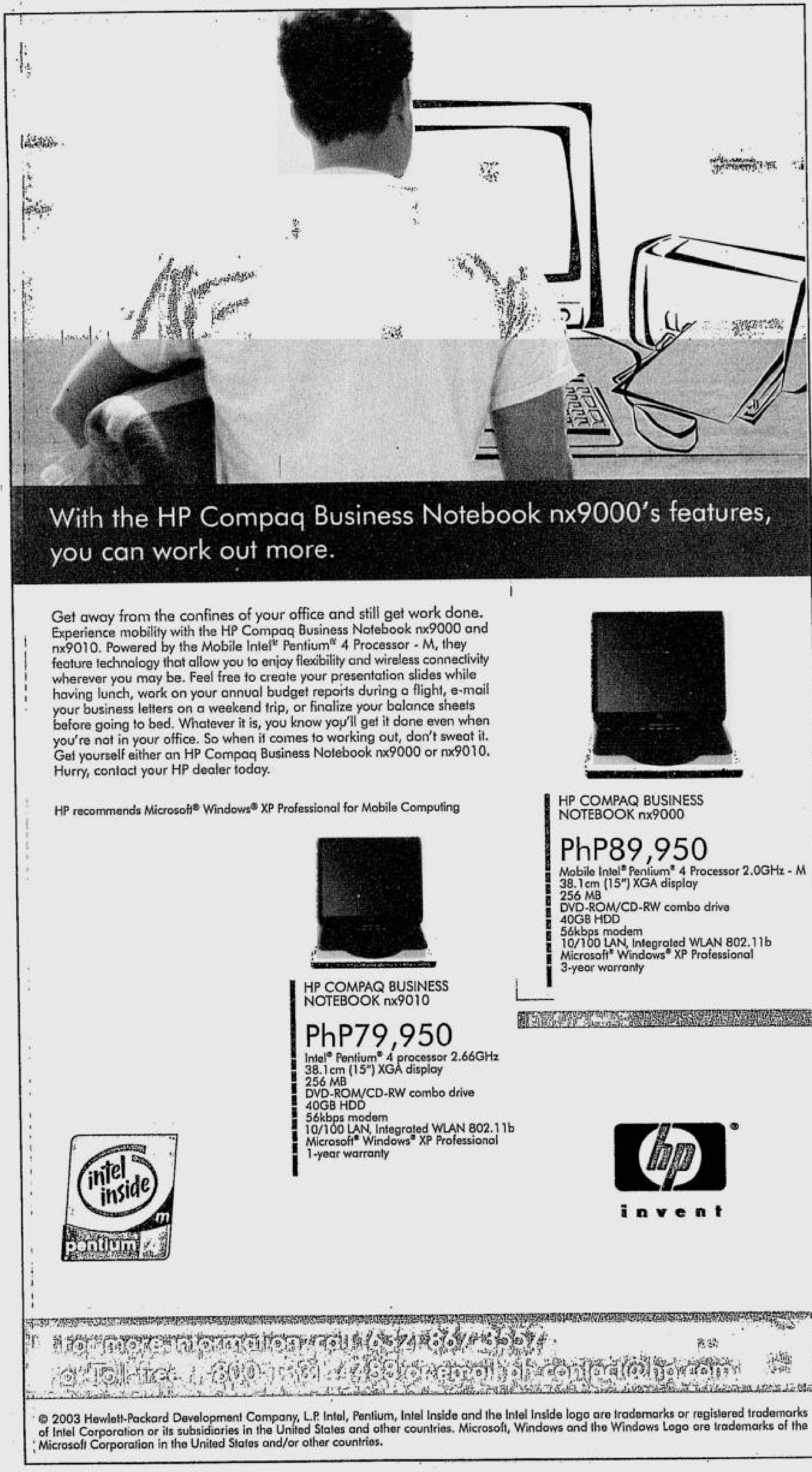
But instead of investigating the allegations, the government appointed Lorenzo into the Cabinet, said Rafael Mariano, KMP chair and convenor of the alliance Resist Agrochemical TNCs (transnational corporations).

Mariano challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo to look into the pesticide poisoning of plantations in the same way she is cracking down on the use of drugs in sweatshops.

"If small garments industries are using drugs to extract the maximum amount of profit regardless of its hazards, much more do big plantations using pesticides (*sic*)," he said.

Lapanday reportedly owns 3,000 hectares in the area.

The KMP said its own fact-finding mission also confirmed that Lapanday's extensive ground and aerial sprayings were causing health and environmental problems in Kamukhaan. This was not surprising, the statement added, because the company used pesticides such as Furadan, Paraquat, Vondozeb—all of which are classified by the US Environmental Protection Agency as possible human carcinogens.



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85 dead in vigilante-related killings in Davao since January

DAVAO CITY—Police authorities admitted that drug-related killings rose to 85 since the start of the year.

Senior Supt. Conrado Laza, city police director, on Tuesday told city councilors during a question hour at the city council, that four of those killed were minors.

The city council had summoned Laza after it was noted that the number of summary executions of suspected drug pushers and users rose in recent days.

Reports reaching councilors show that none of the drug-related killings had been solved and that none of the motorcycle-riding men executing suspected drug pushers and users had been arrested.

But Laza said the police had succeeded in solving 24 of the killings, while other cases were "still under intense follow-up investigation."

Squabbles

Laza said squabbles between drug personalities, and not the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), were behind the executions. "As per record, there is no DDS," he said.

Earlier, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte confirmed the existence of a group of people who want to end the drug menace in the shortest way possible. But he denied a hand in the existence of the group.

Rumors were rife that the operation of the group had the blessings of the police, which, is why none of them had been arrested to date.

But Laza said there were circumstances behind the police's failure to apprehend the perpetrators of the killings.

He said one of these was the lack of manpower. The city, he said, has only 1,189 policemen which is "a very lamentable ratio of one policeman per 1,054 residents."

He also cited the lack of witnesses willing to testify or give statements to investigators.

Inept cops

But Councilor Angela Librado, who once served as a public prosecutor said she consulted former colleagues in the City Prosecutors Office and was told that cases could still prosper even without the material witnesses.

"I'll be frank with you, we are not satisfied with your report," an irate Majority Floor leader Bonifacio Militar told Laza.

Militar said that it appears the police had not improved even with the city government's assistance, which included the recent handover of at least 34 vehicles.

Meanwhile, a convicted drug pusher remained in critical condition at the Davao Medical Center after motorcycle-riding men shot him on Sunday evening.

In Cagayan de Oro City, suspected vigilante members gunned down their 8th victim on Saturday. *Dennis Jay C. Santos with reports from Anthony S. Allada, Ellen P. Red and Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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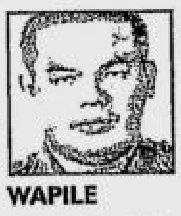

WAPILE

IT IS exactly 430 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

DENR chief urged to cancel forest contracts

BUTUAN CITY—Moderate *lumad* organizations in Caraga, backed by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), pressed Environment Secretary Elizea Gozun to cancel the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) contracts awarded to two Singaporean-Filipino firms.

The *lumad* groups claim they were not consulted when then DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez awarded the contracts, which cover some 128,000 hectares of land in Agusan del Sur, to Shanalynne, Inc. and Tecland, Inc. in May 2001.

Victoriano Vidal, chief executive officer of the Tribal Coalition of Mindanao, said their 600,000 members, including *datus* and former rebels were hoping that Gozun "would open up her mind in favor of the cultural minorities."

Elvira Catuburan, spokesperson of NCIP-Caraga, said the awarding of the contracts was based on the consent given by a lesser-known tribal group, Kahugpungan ng Tribong Lumad sa Caraga (Katrilcar).

She said Katrilcar, which was not even registered with NCIP, does not represent the tribal communities of Agusan del Sur.

"It was really indiscriminate and against the will of true tribal communities," Catuburan said of Alvarez's approval of the contracts.

She said legitimate tribal organizations have since fought for the trashing of the contracts but Alvarez would not listen.

Catuburan said legitimate tribal groups have found a new hope in Gozun.

For this, Catuburan challenged Gozun to immediately terminate the agreements out of respect to Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA Law).

The IPRA Law guarantees the right of the tribal communities to information and consultation on programs that would directly affect them including tree plantations.

The IFMA contracts cover the towns of Loreto, San Luis, Esperanza and La Paz.

Benjamin Tumaliuan, regional environment director, said the contracts were legal because the DENR followed the law to the letter.

He said before the contracts were awarded, the DENR conducted dialogues with local government officials, Manobo, Banwaon, Higaonon and Talaandig tribal leaders in the affected areas.

Gozun said she has ordered a reevaluation of the agreements saying the indigenous peoples have the right to decide what is right for them.

Gozun said the clamor of the IPs were among the main talking points in the reevaluation, even as she acknowledged policy differences between some provisions of the IPRA and the IFMA.

"We are really reevaluating it, I want to have a very firm legal basis for our actions," she said.

But Gozun said with the alarming degradation of the country's forest reserves, including in the Agusan areas, the government would continue to tap private companies to invest in tree plantations and reforestation of denuded lands. *Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Militant groups hit dispersal of Iloilo rally

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Militant groups and human rights organizations have condemned the violent dispersal of a rally near the hotel where President Macapagal-Arroyo stayed overnight on Tuesday.

Jeffrey Celiz, chair of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) on Panay Island, said they would file charges of physical injuries and illegal arrest against police officials for the dispersal, the most violent in the city in recent years.

Six protesters were hurt, two of whom were taken to the Iloilo Doctors Hospital, when around 200 policemen and civilian volunteers stationed near the Barcelo Sarabia Manor Hotel dispersed around 100 protesters holding a rally in front of the University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV)-Iloilo City campus.

The commotion reached a Jollibee fastfood branch near the UPV campus after the dispersal team chased the protesters inside the restaurant.

Samuel Magsael, 36, a member of the drivers group Piston, suffered a deep cut at the back of his head, after he was allegedly pistol-whipped by an unidentified policeman.

Relan Vergara of Bayan-Panay obtained four stitches in the head after he was hit by a wooden club by a member of the dispersal team.

The four others suffered bruises in different parts of their bodies.

They were identified as Ed Dellera, 44, of Piston; Corazon Co, 52 of the urban poor group Kaisog; Jojo Pineda of the artist group Ambon; and Fergerie Panila, 22, of the youth group Anakbayan.

Police detained six protesters at the Police Precinct 1 of the Iloilo City Police Office for holding the rally without a permit and resisting the dispersal.

The police seized from protesters two placards with slogans calling the President the "real terrorist" and 11 pieces of bamboo torches.

Those arrested were identified as Wenefredo Dublezo, spokesperson of the Panay Labor Alliance; Kim Garachico, 20, and Fernando Villas, 21, both of Anakbayan; Michael Orcollo, a member of the urban poor group Kadamay; Kilusang Mayo Uno member Rocel Diasnes and Piston member Albert Buenceschello Sr., 53.

"We were merely exercising our rights, and our rally was peaceful until they shoved us and started hitting us with their batons," said Celiz.

The groups were protesting the government policies regarding high tuition for students, wages for workers and for the ouster of the President, among other issues.

Supt. Alfonso Marduquio, Police Precinct 1 commander, said "reasonable force" was used on the protesters because the rally had no permit and was obstructing traffic.

"They (protesters) started it (commotion) first," he pointed out.

Marduquio said they, too, were planning to file charges against the protesters for allegedly hurting village watchmen by hitting them with bamboo torches.

He, however, failed to give the number of those injured and their identities because they were "still looking for them."

Celiz condemned the use of tanods (civilian volunteers) in the dispersal. He said many of the injured protesters were hit by the volunteers.

A MEMBER of the women's group Gabriela helps another activist who was hit by a truncheon during a rally in Iloilo City that was held in time for the visit of President Macapagal. NESTOR P. BURGOS JR./PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

This Albay village spray-paints 'drug-free' houses

LEGAZPI CITY—Instead of spraying paint on a drug pusher's house as part of their war against illegal drugs, city authorities did the other way around: spraying paint on drug-free houses.

Mayor Noel Rosal led city policemen on Tuesday in spraying the words "Drug-free house," using a green paint on at least 20 houses in Barangay Sabang, a coastal village known to have rampant circulation of illegal drugs.

Village chief Ismael Santillan said that last week, members of the Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council, together with the residents, gathered and discussed the proliferation of drugs in the area.

With the help of the police and the local government, they were able to come up with anti-drug abuse measures like the spray-painting of houses.

The majority of the residents, according to Santillan, agreed to have their houses painted. Eighty-seven residents voted yes, while 20 objected to the initiative.

Those who agreed, Santillan said, volunteered to let their houses sprayed on.

The police conducted an investigation to find out if, indeed, the owners of the volunteered houses were not identified with any illegal drug operation in the area.

Rosal said they are planning to conduct spray-paintings in other barangays, especially those reportedly having rampant drug use.

Supt. Francisco Uyami, Legazpi City police chief, said the move is needed to raise awareness among residents against the use of illegal drugs.

He said they opted to paint the drug-free houses, following concerns raised about human rights violation.

Uyami disclosed that, since his assignment in Legazpi City last year, Sabang has been regarded as a hot spot when it comes to illegal drugs.

Uyami said they are monitoring more than 30 families engaged in drug pushing in the village.

"I said families because, if in one house, there's a member involved in drugs, mostly all family members—even including kids—do the transaction," he said.

They are also setting up a log book system where all the visitors or strangers coming in the area need to sign to monitor the people coming in and out of their place.

They will also impose a curfew, especially for minors.

Drug pushers killed

In Tanauan City, two of Batangas' notorious drug pushers were killed on separate occasions on Monday in Barangay Ambulong in this town and in San Juan town.

In Barangay Ambulong, two alleged drug pushers were ambushed by still unidentified armed men, who killed one of them and left the other in critical condition.

Riddled with bullets on different parts of her body that caused her instant death was Esther Rivera, 50, resident of Barangay Sambat, police said.

She was rushed to the St. Andrew Hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

Her companion, Benito Malabanan, 38, of Barangay Balakilong, Laurel town, who also sustained multiple bullet wounds, was still in critical condition at the Batangas Regional Hospital in Batangas City.

Rivera and Malabanan topped the drugwatch list in the nearby Talisay town.

Initial investigation by Tanauan police revealed that the two were on a motorcycle at 8 a.m. Monday, when they were ambushed by two armed suspects on another motorcycle with no plate number.

The suspects then sprayed bullets at the two victims and fled to the direction of Talisay town, after shooting Rivera and Malabanan.

In San Juan, police said a suspected drug pusher was shot and killed by two still unidentified armed men at dawn on Monday in front of the town's slaughterhouse.

Killed with bullet wounds on the head and on different parts of his body was Rico Balela, 28, a suspected drug pusher and resident of Barangay Escribano in this town. *Joyce Mejillano and Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Police car hits land mine in Catbalogan; cop hurt

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—A policeman was injured when suspected New People's Army rebels ambushed the patrol car of Supt. Conrado Calvario, Samar police director, in Catbalogan town, Samar while on its way to Tacloban City, where President Macapagal-Arroyo was to arrive yesterday afternoon.

Allan Matillano, Police Regional Office-Eastern Visayas (PRO-8) spokesperson, said the sketchy report they received identified the injured policeman as PO1 Popoy Sasil, reportedly the driver of the patrol car.

Calvario and seven other policemen inside the car were unhurt. But Matillano said an M16 rifle and a 9-mm pistol were taken by the rebels from Calvario's vehicle.

The report received by the PRO-8 showed that at about 3 p.m., the patrol car hit a land mine planted on a culvert along the national road between Barangays Socorro and Lagundi, about five kilometers south of the town proper of Catbalogan.

The report said Calvario and the other policemen immediately jumped out of the car and took cover. An undetermined number of rebels allegedly went to the vehicle and took their firearms.

It was not immediately known, however, if Calvario was going to Tacloban City because of President Macapagal who was to stay there overnight. Catbalogan is located some 107 km south of Tacloban City.

Workers 'paint-bomb' DOLE office

CALAMBA CITY—Around 100 striking workers from various companies in Southern Tagalog joined workers from San Miguel Corp., Cosmos, SM, Rustan's and other companies that "bombed" the Department of Labor and Employment office on Tuesday with black, red and blue paints.

Airing their complaints over the department's inaction on their labor disputes, the workers which were led by the Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan (Pamantik) and Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), left the labor office splattered with paint and marked with workers' demands.

The group surrounded the department building and held a program before setting off firecrackers, which signaled the start of the "paint-bombing."

The protesters condemned DOLE for "sustaining trade union repression and violation of labor rights."

Pamantik claimed that DOLE had been constantly behind vicious attacks on trade union rights, including violent dispersals of picket lines, criminalization of labor disputes and rampant contractualization of labor.

"Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas constantly assumes jurisdiction over disputes, albeit in a seemingly capricious manner, crippling strikes and denying justice to workers. Assumption of jurisdiction has given the labor secretary arbitrary power over disputes in favor of capitalists and is accountable to the violent dispersals of picket lines one after the other," Luz Baculo, secretary general of Pamantik-KMU, said.

Baculo pointed out the issue of Nestlé workers in which Sto. Tomas gave a ruling in favor of the management, which was overruled by the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. The Nestlé workers, who have been on strike for more than a year, also experienced the most recent violent dispersal in Southern Tagalog last June 23 and 24, he said.

The dispersal led to the injury of around 50 workers and some security guards of the company. *Clarice Colting, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Village official hurt

COTABATO CITY—A barangay official and his nephew were injured in an early dawn grenade attack that roused nearby residents of Malagapas area on Tuesday. Rushed to the Cotabato Regional and Medical Center for treatment of shrapnel wounds were Udzag Dombi, chair of Barangay Matilak, Kabuntalan, Maguindanao, and his nephew Faisal Adil, 19, a student of this city. A neighbor, Abdulatip Diocolano, said the entire household was awaken by the powerful explosion followed by shrills emanating from Dombi's house. Senior Supt. Peraco Macacua, city police chief, said the victims' house had nine occupants, who were sound asleep when someone hurled a grenade shortly before 3 a.m. Police are still determining the motive of the attack. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 gunsmiths nabbed

SOLANO, Nueva Vizcaya—Police on Monday arrested two gunsmiths suspected of operating an illegal gun factory in Barangay Roxas. Chief Insp. James Afalla, Solano police chief, said personnel of the Philippine National Police's firearms and explosives division and local policemen seized from the suspects 14 assorted pistols and rifles, bullets, various gun parts and tools used in the manufacture of firearms. Arrested were Jorge Paladin, 56, and Cresencio Peregrino, 67. The suspects, however, denied they were into gun manufacturing. "All we have are drills and grinders, so it is impossible for us to be making guns because guns could not be made by hand," Peregrino said. "Those (guns) are not even ours, but were brought to us, mostly by policemen, for repair," he added. *Melvin Gascon and Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

50 'jueteng' men held

BAGUIO CITY—Police arrested at least 50 suspected jueteng employees in separate raids in Barangay Sto. Niño. Members of the anti-illegal gambling Task Force Jericho and policemen arrested four *rebisadores* (bet reviewers) in a house in the village. Confiscated from the suspects were bet money worth P7,250 and other jueteng praphernalia. The team also raided another house and found 46 *rebisadores* and seized more than P26,000 in bet money. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Village official slain

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—A village official in Arayat town was shot and killed by armed men in the town last week. Police identified the victim as Sandy Garcia, 43, village councilor of San Juan Bano in Arayat. Reports said Garcia was on his bicycle at around 11 a.m. on July 10 when a group of armed men fired at him. Recovered from the crime scene were 14 empty shells of M-16 Armalite rifle. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Drug users arrested

OLONGAPO CITY—Police and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency arrested 10 suspected drug users in separate operations on Saturday night. Senior Supt. Orlando Maddela Jr., Olongapo police chief, said seven suspects were caught while sniffing shabu in a house in Barangay West Bajac-Bajac. Police seized seven plastic sachets containing shabu, and assorted drug paraphernalia from the suspects. Three others were arrested in separate operations in the city. In Pampanga, police arrested the third most wanted man and two other suspected drug pushers in the City of San Fernando in a series of buy-bust operations last week. Police said Francis Bustos, 41, was arrested after selling a small plastic sachet of shabu to a police informant. Two other suspected drug pushers, Danilo Santos, 36, and Josie Musni, 34, were arrested by the police. *Allan Macatuno and Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Guard found dead

Pilar, Sorsogon—A security guard was found dead Tuesday inside the compound of a Smart cellsite in Barangay Dao. Gregorio Venus Jr., a resident of Barangay Banuyo, was found dead by Oscar de la Cruz, also a security guard, when the latter reported for work, police said. Sr. Supt. Arne de los Santos said Venus was hit by a hard object in the head, causing multiple injuries which resulted in his death. Witnesses identified a certain Carlos Marqueses, of Barangay Lumbang, as the suspect since he was allegedly seen jumping out of the closed steel gate of the cellsite compound, police reported. Marqueses, who is said to be mentally deranged, was charged with murder after he admitted the crime to the police, De los Santos said. *Emir Gamis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Reward for drug info

LEGAZPI CITY—The Police Regional Office 5 will give a cash reward of P50,000 to whoever could give vital information on sources of illegal drugs, especially marijuana plantations, in Bicol. Chief Supt. Jaime Lasar, PRO5 director, said the move is to encourage residents to assist in the overall efforts to fight the drug menace. He said least 44 illegal drug personalities in the region were neutralized after 49 anti-drug operations since last month. Lasar also encouraged the parents and other relatives of suspected drug dependents to submit them for rehabilitation than be arrested by police and charged in court. *Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

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Giant clams spawn hopes

By Mei Magsino
Batangas City

AT THE BURST of the morning sun, residents of Barangay Ilijan, a coastal community 36 km east of Batangas City, started walking toward the beach, tagging along their children who had also woken up early. They were eager to see the start of a new fish sanctuary that a nearby power plant had initiated.

When the convoy from the Kepco Ilijan plant arrived, the children crowded around the truck, carrying white and brown boxes. Inside the Styrofor boxes with wooden enclosure were giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*), locally known as *kima* or *taclobo*, from the University of the Philippines' Marine Science Institute in Bolinao, Pangasinan.

Each box contained only two 30-centimeter clams.

As marine biologist Ruben Estudillo and members of the Coast Guard in Batangas opened the boxes, the children excitedly pointed at the 3-year-old clams and watched the shells close.

A MEMBER of the Batangas Coast Guard places one of the giant clams in the sea. COURTESY OF KEPCO-ILIJAN

Stockholders

"The children are the real stockholders here. Because if we could now improve the marine ecology of Ilijan, the next generation will be the beneficiaries of a rich coral reef," Estudillo said.

He said he had been conducting seminars with the residents and lectures for the children.

"I taught them all about the giant clams and made them understand why they should take good care of them. You can't protect any organism if you don't know its biology," he said.

"Children will play an important role in this program. Since they were taught all about the clams, they will now protect them from poachers because they know that these clams hold a better future for their reef. In the end, everything we do now is for the children and the next generation," Estudillo said.

Clam seeding

The country has only three clam-seeding programs, he said. The other two are in Mabini town in Batangas and in Mauban, Quezon.

Prudencio Cepillo, barangay chair of Ilijan, said he had taken the first step to assure the safety of the clams.

"I have already warned the Badjao communities [in the vicinity] not to get the clams. They've been diving in this area since they transferred years ago," Cepillo said.

Since the clam seeding area is in front of his house, which is only 20 meters from the shores, he would personally see to it that they were well guarded, he said.

The project to seed giant clams on June 10 was led by Kepco-Ilijan, the host community of Ilijan, the city's Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro), the Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office (PGENRO) and the Philippine Coast Guard.

Kepco-Ilijan is a subsidiary of Korean Electric Power Corp. (Kepco) in South Korea.

According to Won Kyung Sung, Kepco-Ilijan vice president for operations, the project is like giving back to the host community and to nature the good things that nature has been providing the company.

"In our first two years here, we got rid of all the plastic garbage in the sea. Then we maintained its cleanliness. Now, we have this clam-seeding project. When it becomes successful, more clam-seeding operations will follow, and we will assign a bigger team to monitor those," Won said.

Coral reef

The power plant, which started operations in June last year, is expected to save the Philippines about 1.6 million barrels of oil and its value in foreign exchange annually. It can produce 1,200 megawatts (MW) of electricity, generated through a combined cycle process fueled by natural gas from the Malampaya gas field in northern Palawan and piped to the Shell Refinery in Tabangao.

Natural gas is recognized as the cheapest among fossil fuels. Electricity generated by the plant boosts the supply of the Luzon grid.

Allan de la Torre, community relations manager of Kepco-Ilijan, said the clam project fulfilled the company's role in improving the environment of the host community, in accordance with its environment compliance certificate.

"We are now in a campaign to protect the seas and develop the coral reef. In seven years, the giant clams will spawn and improve the reef," De la Torre said.

A total of 34 giant clams were seeded in the power plant's jetty area, while 16 were seeded in the barangay waters at depths of 10 to 30 feet.

True clams

Estudillo said the giant clam species were considered the "true clams."

"These giant clams are the only ones that don't cling to the stones and can easily be lifted from the sea. That's why they are nearly extinct because some people take them and eat them. Compared with other clams, they have more flesh, and considered a delicacy by some people. Some people also turn the shell into an ornament," he explained.

Estudillo, who serves as consultant of First Gas Power Corp. and Kepco-Ilijan, said the giant clams were exclusively marine. "The clams can live only in clean and clear saltwater. In my four years in Batangas, I have discovered that the entire cove of Ilijan was 100 percent coral reef. And this place has very clean water fit for the clams."

The giant clams are hermaphrodite, a unique characteristic that helps them multiply fast as they produce sperm and egg cells on the tenth year or the spawning year. But only the sperm of another clam can fertilize an egg.

"When the giant clams spawn, the sperm and egg cells become a source of food for other fishes. But while they are not yet on the spawning stage, the algae and seaweed that cling to their shells also serve as food and habitat for fishes," Estudillo claimed.

"The millions of eggs and sperms they will produce will (serve as) food for small fishes. The small fishes will then attract the big fishes and this reef will once again be rich."

Food source

Cenro chief Felipe Baroja said the development of Ilijan from a sleepy community into a village bustling with life has been an astounding change.

"It's very difficult to balance ecology and economic development. But in Ilijan, the rise of industry and environment preservation go hand-in-hand," Baroja said.

According to the Cenro's study, Ilijan has the cleanest water in the city.

PGENRO officer Evelyn Estigoy, who was one of the resource persons in the program that followed the clam seeding, asked the residents to protect and look after the clams.

"When the giant clams spawn, they will multiply and improve the marine ecology of Ilijan, and with that, the people will have no problem with food source anymore," said Estigoy.

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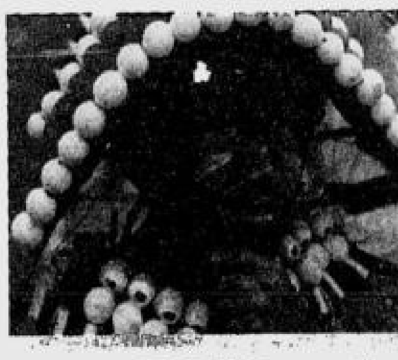

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FRONT row (from left): Juan G. Coreces, Corporate Secretary-BancNet; Lualhati D. Nicolas, Banco Filipino; Marilyn F. Suarez, Merchants Bank; Angelito M. Villanueva, Metrobank; Ricardo R. Chua, China Bank; Cecilia A. Irigo, UOB; Ma. Rodora E. Bañares, Security Bank; and Francisco M. Caparros, Jr., Asia United Bank. Back row (from left): Jose Maria P. Valdes, Export & Industry Bank; Robert P. Blas, Citibank; German S. Pijuan, Allied Bank; Virgilio J. Katigbak, PBCom; Jose F. Santos, RCBC; Joseph Gerard D. Tiamson, Standard Chartered Bank; Joven D. Reyes, RCBC; George P. Castro, Philtrust Bank.

THERE ARE just too many things to pay for in life. Every household has regular bills for utilities such as water, electricity and the telephone, not to mention grocery and shopping bills. Add to this, payments needed for credit card dues, cell phone charges, cable TV and insurance. And for the working class, there's the inevitable tax payments and SSS contributions for private sector employees. BancNet, the country's leading ATM network, has an easier way of paying all these.

On the occasion of its 13th anniversary, BancNet revolutionizes payments with multi-channel options that let you pay through the ATM, Internet and point-of-sale terminals. Say goodbye to the inconveniences of having to line up at the bank to get cash only to be turned off by limited banking hours and the feeling of uneasiness when carrying large amounts. Get the most out of your BancNet ATM card to pay bills, buy things and transfer funds.

BancNet chair Angelito M. Villanueva would like to think that "Everybody pays. And when they do, we want them to do it through multiple options that BancNet channels have to offer. As we move on to become a major payments network, BancNet will maintain the same qualities it has always been known for—availability, convenience, security and reliability."

BancNet president Ricardo R. Chua is confident that "After 13 years of being a leading electronic network, BancNet continues to pursue new initiatives by keeping pace with the advances in technology to satisfy the evolving needs of its cardholders. The path towards becoming a leading payments network is something well within our reach, given the same support and dedication we have all shown through all these years".

Experience cashless shopping

Imagine this. At the mall, your teenage daughter spotted a pair of designer shoes that she has been eyeing for months now and your youngest son wants the newest game console as prize for his high grades. It's a Sunday and banks are closed, you don't have cash in the wallet, and the line at the ATM machine is incredibly long, and even if it were not, you could only withdraw so much.

No problem. With BancNet's Point-Of-Sale (POS) service, one can instantly do the purchase since leading department stores and groceries nationwide accept BancNet cards. With just one swipe of your ATM card at the POS terminal and by keying in your PIN as a security requirement, you simply debit the amount of sale from your savings and checking account. No need to worry about annual fees, escalating interest rates, penalties and surcharges that credit cards bring. Using your ATM card is just like paying cash without the hassle of bringing money around.

Transfer funds minus the sweat

Doing business is fast, easy and convenient with BancNet's Fund Transfer facility. The only one-of-a-kind feature among ATM networks in the country, BancNet gives you the flexibility to move funds from one account to the other, be it your own or that of another person, for as long as all parties concerned are BancNet cardholders. You can even do it at an ATM of another BancNet member bank and have three different banks involved in the transaction.

BancNet cardholders can also do it at the comfort of their home or office through BancNet Online. Just log on to www.bancnetonline.com and user-friendly screens will guide you to doing secure fund transfers in real time.

So whether it's the regular allowance to kids or relatives or paying for business deals, BancNet makes it possible for people to easily transfer or receive money as long as you have access to the Internet or to a wide number of ATMs across the country.

Paying bills in a breeze

Paying your bills on time can be a tiresome process. First you need to locate the payment center nearest you, only to find out that you still have to fall in line. Over-the-counter payments at banks are not any easier, not to mention that some banks have scheduled days for bills payment.

Waste no more of your time and energy. Use your BancNet card to pay for utilities, cable TV, credit card, phone bills, insurance and many more through the ATM or the Internet. You can even make charitable contributions to Bantay Bata, Piso Para sa Pasig and the Knowledge Channel. The best part of it all is that these can be done anywhere and anytime with the availability of BancNet channels.

Paying your taxes and SSS contributions

The Bureau of Internal Revenue likewise saw merit in utilizing BancNet to complement their Electronic Filing and Payment System. Taxpayers with a BancNet ATM account now have the option of paying their income tax and value added tax by debiting their deposits through BancNet Online.

Realizing the need for a faster, more efficient and secure mode for the electronic transmission of SSS contributions, BancNet also has the EDI-SSSNet, which covers the electronic submission by an employer to the SSS of the Monthly Contribution List (MCL) file, and the corresponding Payment Order message to the employer's depository bank. All this is achieved with no front-end costs for employers since no subscription fee, maintenance charges, and other expenses are imposed. The success of this BancNet offering has resulted to the easier handling of SSS contributions for over 650 employers and 12 accredited banks.

Going beyond ATM banking

The traditional ways to pay will still be very much around. But e-payments carried out through the ATM, Internet, mobile phones, chip-based cards and other electronic modes are beginning to attract more people not only because of their convenience, but also because it has proven to be safe and secure.

With the existing BancNet infrastructure in place, member banks need not shell out huge investments on their part to join the e-payments bandwagon. BancNet channels have paved the way to enable new solutions and business models to keep up with the emerging trends in e-payments.

Like the payments system that has gone from barter to coins, checks and currencies and now to electronic payments, the BancNet ATM card has come a long way. Backed by the strength of 25 connected banks and one of the widest ATM coverage in the country, BancNet is maximizing the features of its existing channels to create more value for its cardholders and member banks.

EXCOM MEMBERS
FROM left, Francisco M. Caparros, Jr.; Jose F. Santos; Juan G. Coreces, Corporate Secretary; Joven D. Reyes, Vice Chairman; Ma. Rodora E. Bañares; Ricardo R. Chua, Chairman; and Angelito M. Villanueva. (L) Ricardo R. Chua, BancNet President and China Bank EVP and COO (R) Angelito M. Villanueva, BancNet Chairman and Metrobank Senior EVP

BancNet executive forum takes E-Payments to the frontier

BANCNET, the country's leading electronic network for financial services, is holding its 2003 Executive Forum today at 1:30 p.m. at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza in Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Experts and prominent personalities will speak on the topic of "e-Payments: the Power Frontier." The annual forum is the focal activity in celebration of BancNet's 13th anniversary and is exclusive for member banks' senior officers and invited guests.

Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo L. Parayno will share his expertise in "Harnessing e-Payments in Government Service." As an active e-government advocate, Mr. Parayno will discuss his vision for adopting proven payments technology to ensure efficient and transparent tax collection. He will also explain e-commerce initiatives of the government and the BIR in particular.

PLDT President and CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan will discuss the "Emerging Trends in e-Transactions," Mr. Pangilinan will present strategic directions of the leading communications company in the Philippines, highlighting how the strategy of convergence between technology as the enabler and culture and business as content, enhances transfers between businesses and individuals.

Mr. Mark Patrick, vice president for Business and Technology Integration of MasterCard International Asia Pacific Region, will discuss "E-Commerce: Evolution and Status of the e-Payments Marketplace." Mr. Patrick will tracet the advancement of e-payments leading to the current trends and challenges. With MasterCard's e-business services and solutions as model, he will impart industry solutions and their implications to banks, merchants and cardholders.

The head of Visa International's Deposit Access Products--Marketing and Product Sales of Asia Pacific Region, Mr. Erode S. Nilakantan will show the basics for "Building a Debit Business." By presenting different business cases, Mr. Nilakantan will show how BancNet member banks can benefit from successful implementations in developing debit card products based on the practices from more advanced countries.

Ms. Ces Drilon, distinguished TV host of ABS-CBN Business News (ANC), director for the ABS-CBN Business Group and host of her own show Point Blank rejoins BancNet on this occasion as host of the forum.

ERODE NILAKANTAN

COMM. GUILIERMO PARAYNO

MANUEL PANGILINAN

MARK PATRICK

BIR taps BancNet for tax e-payments

THE DAYS of long queues in filing and paying your income tax may soon be over, thanks to the Bureau of Internal Revenue and BancNet.

With the BIR's Electronic Filing and Payment System or EFPS, the filing of tax returns and payment of tax liabilities by large corporate taxpayers, professionals and individuals may now be done through the Internet banking facilities of authorized agent banks and ATM networks. Following this lead, the BIR recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with BancNet to utilize BancNet Online, the network's multi-channel payment gateway, as a highly acceptable channel for e-payments.

The partnership between the Bureau of Internal Revenue and BancNet is a big leap in doing away with the traditional paper-based tax filing and payment processing. As the first partnership with an ATM network in the country, the BIR need not accept numerous bank applications and go through the extra step of accrediting the member banks separately. Member banks in turn, need not invest heavily on the payment infrastructure with BancNet's payment gateway facility already in place.

BancNet cardholders now have the option of paying their income tax and value added tax by debiting their deposit or ATM bank accounts through BancNet Online. BancNet then processes and transmits the information back to the EFPS and the taxpayer. Since everything is done online, information exchange is immediately available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at no cost to the cardholder. The BIR and BancNet ensure that all transactions are highly secure through the encryption of data transmission and conformity to industry-standard protocols.

As the largest ATM network with 25 member banks, over 6 million cardholders and over 1,700 ATMs, BancNet will be a key player in helping the Bureau of Internal Revenue improve tax collection and generate the needed revenues.

Member Banks

Allied Bank
Asia United Bank
Banco Filipino
Banco San Juan
Bangko Kredito
China Bank
Chinatrust Bank
Citibank
Citystate Savings Bank
Centennial Savings Bank
East West Bank
Export and Industry Bank
Malayan Savings Bank
Manila Bank
Merchants Bank
Metrobank
PBCom
Philtrust Bank
RCBC
RCBC Savings Bank
PSBank
Planters Bank
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Standard Chartered Bank
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Working harder for you
to make your dreams of a better life a reality.

Bringing you
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BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK OFFERS BACK-TO-BACK PROMOS

BPI Family Savings Bank, the leader in auto financing, is again rewarding its auto loan clients with the launch of its back-to-back promotions: **"Incredible Indulgence"** and **"Treat For Repeat."**

Due to the warm reception of auto loan clients to BPI Family Savings Bank's promos, the Happy Family Auto Loan's **Incredible Indulgence** is back! From July 15 to Sept. 30, 2003, auto loan clients with a minimum loan amount of Php450,000, will automatically get an Incredible Indulgence package. The package includes an overnight accommodation for a family of 4 (2 adults with 2 kids - 12 years old and younger) with breakfast in any one of the partner hotels. As a sweetener, the package gives an additional treat with either a dinner for 4 or a relaxing massage for the couple.

Hotel partners to choose from are: **Manila-** Manila Diamond Hotel; Westin Philippine Plaza; Astoria Plaza **Batangas-** Evercrest Golf & Country Club **Baguio-** Baguio Country Club **Cebu-** Waterfront Cebu City **Bacolod-**L'Fisher Hotel **Iloilo-** Hotel del Rio **Cagayan de Oro-** Marco Hotel **Davao-** Marco Polo Hotel.

And, to reward Happy Family Auto Loans' loyal clients, BPI Family Savings Bank is offering its **Treat For Repeat** promo! Previous and existing auto loan clients, who will avail of another auto loan, regardless of the amount financed, will have a chance to choose one of the following five lifestyle showcases:

Nature Tripper Showcase - Pop-up Tent, Sleeping Bag and Water carrier

Frequent Traveler Showcase - Trolley bag, Overnighter, Back Pack and Toiletry case

Everyday Motorist Showcase - Air Compressor, Steering Wheel Lock, Towing Kit and Booster Cable

Exercise Buff Showcase - Gym Bag with Digital Jump Rope, Dumbbells, Grips and Tummy Trimmer

Craftsman Showcase - Large Toolbox with Professional Screwdriver set, Hammer, Vise Grip, Tape Measure, Steel Saw, Utility Knife, Pliers and Adjustable Wrench

Redemption of these showcases will only be until Feb. 29, 2004.

BPI Family Savings Bank Repeat Clients with minimum amount financed of Php450,000 will get both the Treat For Repeat showcase and the Incredible Indulgence package if loan is booked from July 15 to Sept. 30, 2003.

So, what are you waiting for? Rush to the nearest BPI or BPI Family Savings Bank, your favorite auto dealer or you may log on to www.bpidirect.com and avail of the Happy Family Auto Loan now!

The Happy Family Auto Loan with EC Pay Insurance*

BPI Family Savings Bank has been in the forefront of the Auto Financing industry, continuously innovating and providing auto loans at the lowest rates in the market. Now, BPI Family Savings Bank brings auto financing a step further by offering the first auto loan with built-in insurance, the Happy Family Auto Loan with EC Pay Insurance.

Auto loan clients continue to enjoy the best auto financing at the lowest rates that only BPI Family Savings Bank can give. And this is now bundled with the EC Pay Insurance, an auto insurance product that provides continuous protection throughout the duration of the loan.

EC Pay stands for Easy and Convenient. It's Easy because this product affords the client very simple payment terms, there is no initial cash outlay, plus you pay the insurance premiums together with the monthly amortizations. The auto loan client doesn't have to pay the large sums usually needed for the insurance premiums of the vehicle.

It's Convenient because the insurance coverage is co-terminus with the loan, whether it's for a one (1) year loan or a five (5) year loan, EC Pay covers the vehicle all throughout, automatically. So clients are not hassled with the annual renewal of their insurance coverage nor bothered by submitting their insurance policy to BPI Family Savings Bank.

EC Pay Insurance also offers FREE Personal Accident insurance for five passengers and FREE typhoon and flood protection, which is not standard to auto insurance policies. It also gives the auto loan clients coverage for the reimbursement of accident related towing expenses up to Php1,500, as well as the reimbursement of accident related ambulance expenses up to Php5,000.

EC Pay is only available with a Happy Family Auto Loan and you can apply for this through any BPI or BPI Family Savings Bank branch in Metro Manila or directly to BPI Family Savings Bank Auto Loans at 845-6777 or 754-6744. All of this is in line with BPI Family Savings Bank's commitment to give their borrowers the best possible products available in the market today.

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* Initially available in Metro Manila only

ADVT.

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK

HAPPY FAMILY AUTO LOAN

Enjoy an overnight stay, with... a Special Feast for 4 Or Spa Treats for 2

Incredible Indulgence
BPI-FB

Photo Location: The Westin Philippine Plaza

Enjoy a free overnight stay in a choice hotel. With sumptuous dinner for 4 Or a relaxing massage for 2. Exciting choices that automatically go with your BPI Family Savings Bank Happy Family Auto Loan. Apply Now!

CALL
845-6777, 845-6546

VISIT
www.bpiexpressonline.com

DROP BY
Your nearest BPI and BPI Family Savings Bank branch or any Express Banking Center.

Here's how:

1. Just visit any BPI or BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK branch nationwide, the nearest participating auto dealer or log-on to www.bpidirect.com and avail of a Happy Family Auto Loan from July 15 to September 30, 2003. (Application is subject to Bank's approval)
2. This promo covers BRAND NEW and SECOND HAND vehicle types: Passenger Cars, Vans, Sports Utility Vehicles, Light Commercial Vehicles, Asian Utility Vehicles and Trucks.
3. To join the promo, approved minimum loan amount should be Php450,000.00
4. Multi-Purpose Loan (MPL) borrowers are eligible to join the promo provided all the above conditions are met. Purchase of Reconditioned vehicle is still not qualified to join the promo.
5. Clients have to choose only one (1) from the two (2) types of Incredible Indulgence Luxury Packages. Choices are as follows:
   - Family Package - inclusive of an overnight stay with breakfast and dinner for a family of four (two adults and two kids 12 years old and below).
   - Couples Package - inclusive of an overnight stay with breakfast and spa treatment for two adults.
6. Incredible Indulgence Luxury Packages are to be availed at any of the following hotels:
   - Manila Diamond Hotel (Roxas Boulevard)
   - Astoria Plaza (Ortigas Center)
   - Baguio Country Club (Baguio City)
   - L'Fisher Hotel** (Bacolod City)
   - Marco Hotel** (Cagayan de Oro)
   - Westin Philippine Plaza (CCP Complex)
   - Evercrest Golf and Country Club (Batulao)
   - Waterfront Cebu City (Cebu City)
   - Hotel del Rio** (Iloilo City)
   - The Marco Polo (Davao)
7. Transportation to the hotel site is not included. Beverage expenses are for the clients' account.
8. Clients should choose only one type of Incredible Indulgence Luxury Package from the list in #5 to be availed in only one (1) of the participating hotels as listed in #6.
9. The Client should make reservations with the official promo coordinator of BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK. Reservation is subject to the hotel's availability.
10. Upon availment of the loan, the Incredible Indulgence Luxury Pass will be sent to the client together with the loan documents.
11. In the event that a client does not register at the chosen hotel by 6:00pm on his confirmed booking date, he will be charged a Php3,000.00 no-show fee prior to re-booking.
12. Availment of the Incredible Indulgence Luxury Packages is only until November 30, 2003. Unclaimed packages will be declared void after this date.
13. All packages are transferable but not convertible to cash.

** No Spa Treatments

Only the Happy Family Auto Loan comes with these fine features:

- Low, Low Interest Rates
- Only ₱ 30,000 Monthly Income To Qualify
- Only 1 Day To Get A CreditDecision
- With A Built-in Insurance Option

BPI Family Savings Bank Provincial Business Centers:
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Cebu: (032) 254-0895/97 • Iloilo: (033) 335-0229
Bacolod: (034) 435-0639; 433-8032 • Cagayan De Oro: (08822) 726-067 • Davao: (082) 224-0931/34

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2952 Series of 2003.

THE WESTIN PHILIPPINE PLAZA MANILA · WATERFRONT CEBU CITY HOTEL · MANILA DIAMOND HOTEL · ASTORIA PLAZA ORTIGAS CENTER · THE MARCO POLO DAVAO · BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB · Evercrest Golf and Country Club · Hotel del Rio · CAGAYAN DE ORO · L'Fisher

In cooperation with 105.1 CROSSOVER

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Solons rush changes in land reform law

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al Appropriations Act, which President Macapagal-Arroyo is expected to submit to Congress after her scheduled State of the Nation Address on July 28.

Two conditions

The indemnification of the human rights victims is one of the two conditions set by the Federal Swiss Supreme Court in 1997 before transferring the Marcos Swiss accounts to an escrow account of the Philippine National Bank, according to Commissioner Ruben Carranza of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The other condition is for a final court ruling on the ownership of the accounts. The Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday that some P36 billion in Marcos' ill-gotten wealth now deposited in an escrow account of the PNB was ill-gotten.

The funds, initially deposited in Swiss banks through five front foundations, were frozen by Swiss authorities in 1986 when these amounted to $356 million. They are now worth $682 million, or about P36 billion.

Carranza said the Swiss Federal Supreme Court only asked for "due process" in the forfeiture case and regular updates on the court proceedings and efforts to indemnify the victims.

"As far as the requirement to report to them these measures, it has been met. As far as the requirement of due process, obviously it has been met," Carranza said.

"The requirement is not for us to actually be able to indemnify the human rights victims before the (court) decision is made, because that would be guaranteeing something we cannot," he said

"What's important here is we have asked Congress to once again act on the human rights compensation bill and the President herself urged Congress to act on it," Carranza said.

The PCGG sponsored the bill filed by Rosales.

Human rights victims themselves asked Ms Macapagal to expedite their compensation following the landmark Supreme Court decision.

Claimants

Selda, a group of claimants that initiated the class suit against the Marcoses in 1986, said Ms Macapagal should now certify as urgent congressional bills setting aside P10 billion, or almost a third of the forfeited Marcos loot, for the victims or their families.

The group said the President could announce her endorsement of the bills during her Sona before the joint session of Congress on July 28. Selda was referring to HB 4535 and SB 1877.

At a press conference, Selda secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez said that her group applauded the Supreme Court ruling, "it merely wrote on the books something that we have all known (all along): That the Philippine government was once headed by a tyrant-cum-thief."

"It's now up to President Macapagal to put a stop to our long wait for justice," Enriquez said. "She can either allot the Marcos loot for her government programs in aid of election or initially soothe the festering wounds of the Marcos victims."

Jayson Lamchek of the Public Interest Law Center, which is assisting Selda, said HB 4535 and SB 1877 "have continued to languish in Congress because of lack of support from the Macapagal administration and the influence of the Marcos family in certain quarters of Congress."

Ilocano bloc

Lamchek said the "Ilocano bloc" in the House of Representatives, led by Rep. Imee Marcos of Ilocos Norte, daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, nearly succeeded last May in inserting amendments in HB 4535 to make the bill "applicable to all human rights victims, regardless of the regime."

Representative Marcos and her allies wanted "no reference to the Marcoses" and turn the bill into a "generic" compensation package, according to Lamchek.

Had it succeeded, the lawyer said, the move would have practically cleared the dictator of the atrocities committed during his 20-year rule.

The House version has been reported out by the committee on civil, political and human rights chaired by Rosales, and is awaiting approval on second reading. The Senate counterpart is still at the committee level.

Aside from these bills, another "basis" for compensating Marcos victims would be a 1998 agreement between the government and the communist-led National Democratic Front, according to Enriquez. She said the compensation deal was considered a confidence building measure in the then ongoing peace talks,

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran said the PCGG should be made the caretaker of the Marcos funds recovered by the government.

Beltran said there must be a clear-cut recommendation to compensate the families of the victims of human rights abuses during martial law.

"While it is true that their suffering and loss can never be assuaged by any amount, the financial compensation is a symbolic means by which justice can be expressed and carried out short of imprisonment for the still-living henchmen and supporters of martial law," he said.

Who has final say

In the Senate, two opposition senators said Ms Macapagal and her finance officials could not just disburse the P36 billion for purposes other than agrarian reform.

"In no way that the funds could be used for AFP modernization or to pay debts," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said. "Because the law is very clear; these are to be used for the benefit of the beneficiaries of land reform."

Biazon yesterday filed a resolution asking the Senate to conduct an inquiry to determine who has the final say on the funds.

A decree issued in 1986 by then President Corazon Aquino creating the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the Comprehensive Agrariah Reform Law—govern the final disposition of any recovered Marcos ill-gotten wealth, according to Biazon.

He, however, acknowledged a "side issue," which is the ruling by a federal court in Honolulu awarding $1.2 billion to human rights victims. "But this will require legislation to address this ruling of the Hawaiian court," the senator said.

For her part, Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta reminded the Palace that the P36 billion could not be used to plug the budget deficit. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

140,000 victims to get P70,000 each if...

By Volt Contreras

WITH their large number, victims of Marcos regime atrocities will, theoretically, receive an average of only around P70,000 each should they finally get their longtime demand for compensation.

This was the figure given yesterday by Selda, a group of human rights victims during the Marcos dictatorship, as it pressed for immediate indemnification in view of the landmark Supreme Court ruling forfeiting some P36 billion in Marcos loot to the government.

Closure

But Selda Secretary General Marie Hilao Enriquez clarified that the money was not really important. "It's the closure and the official government recognition of our sufferings that we want."

The government, she said, could at least erect a "monument or memorial" bearing the "official list" of Marcos victims which, according Selda's research initiated shortly after Marcos' ouster in 1986, would total about "140,000."

This 140,000, she said, would have to share the P10-billion compensation package stipulated in pending congressional bills that give human rights victims a share of the recovered Marcos wealth.

And P10 billion divided by 140,000 is just over P70,000, she told the INQUIRER at a press forum in Quezon City yesterday.

But she pointed out that under the pending "compensation" bills, the amount per claimant may still vary " depending on the hardship suffered."

As per Selda's reckoning, she said, 120,000 of the total figure represented anti-Marcos dissidents who were illegally detained, while the rest accounted for the missing or those summarily executed.

Marcos lawyer . . .

From page A1

tions of law, not facts, since it is the lower court that resolves the factual issue," Sison pointed out.

Just pleadings

"This is very novel. In Philippine jurisprudence, this is the first time that it ruled on factual issue without receiving evidence, just pleadings. My clients have also constitutional rights," he continued.

Sison expressed his alarm over what he said was the possibility that Malacañang has many allies in the high court. "Even before the ruling on the coco levy issue, we have seen the decisions of the Supreme Court favor the administration," Sison told reporters. "It appears that the Supreme Court has the tendency to rule in favor of the administration."

Sison, who has been lawyering for the two Marcos children since 1995 and who also represented former first lady Imelda Marcos in other cases, said he would immediately file his motion within the 15-day prescribed period.

Sison also said he was "saddened" by the way the Supreme Court handled controversial cases before it.

At the same time, Sison said he was confident the justices would reverse their decision and make an exception of this case.

Sison said he saw an emerging pattern in recent judicial decisions.

He cited the Sandiganbayan decision on Friday which gave the government control of United Coconut Planters Bank that had been taken over by businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. allegedly with the help of the coconut levy.

Sison also cited an earlier Supreme Court ruling nullifying the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. contract. He said many lawyers were puzzled why the justices voted that way.

"I'm not saying that our justices are not independent-minded. I will not say that. But they're in a way influenced by a lot of things that they see around," he said, without elaborating.

Asked on the chances of the Supreme Court reversing itself on the issue of funds being held in escrow, Sison said, "We'll just leave it to their conscience."

Representative Marcos refused to comment, saying she was leaving it to Sison to appeal the case since "these are all legal concerns."

"The (former) first lady was sad about what is going on, but she was not surprised by the court's ruling," Sison told reporters.

Political ally

A close associate and political ally of the Marcoses yesterday claimed that politics worked behind the Supreme Court decision declaring the family's $682-million Swiss deposits as ill-gotten.

"Of course it's politics," said Ilocos Norte Rep. Roque Ablan Jr., a longtime Marcos supporter, without elaborating.

Ablan is one of the original allies who have stuck with the Marcoses even after a group of Marcos loyalists led by Cherry Cobarrubias withdrew support from former first lady Imelda Marcos last year.

"I hope the government can (still) consider the arguments of the Marcoses because nobody has established where the money came from," he added.

Provincial capitol officials in Laoag City said Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was on vacation in London until July 24.

Reached through his mobile phone in San Francisco, California, Ablan hinted there was still hope that the Marcoses could wage a successful appeal of the high court's decision.

He cited an earlier ruling by a Hawaii court awarding $150 million in compensation to 10,000 victims of human rights violations under martial law.

"The US court ruled in favor of the victims (but) the court is outside the jurisdiction of the Philippihes," Ablan, also a lawyer, said. *With reports from Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AFP*

DAR to use ₱36B to buy 3M hectares . . .

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human rights victims once the Macapagal government uses the P36 billion ill-gotten wealth to the bogus and anti-peasant CARP," KMP secretary general Danilo Ramos said.

The KMP said farmers would not benefit at all from the government's land reform program.

"The money will only go back to big landlords and Marcos cronies like Danding Cojuangco. It will be used for the 'compensation of landholdings of big landlords, who will later grab the lands from so-called farmer-beneficiaries using the CARP itself," Ramos said.

But the Philippine Peasant Institute, a farmer-based research and advocacy group, expects the government to accelerate the agrarian reform process as a result of the Supreme Court ruling.

"This is another welcome development for small farmers coming on the heels of the recent Sandiganbayan ruling on the coco levy fund. We urge the government to fully utilize the money for agrarian reform implementation as mandated," PPI executive director Romeo Royandoyan said.

Royandoyan urged the government to consider the creation of a special agency with strong farmer representation to manage the resources.

Accelerate land distribution

"With money coming in from the frozen Swiss accounts, we see no reason for DAR not to accelerate the distribution of private agricultural lands, especially of huge tracts of sugar lands and coconut lands like those owned by Cojuangco," Royandoyan said.

He said that the PPI was open to the idea of allocating a portion of the ill-gotten wealth for human rights victims.

The Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services Inc. is also amenable to using part of the ill-gotten wealth to indemnify human rights victims. PARDDS is composed of six national farmers federation, eight national NGOs and veteran agrarian reform leaders and advocates.

"Now that the government is getting back part by part the gigantic stolen wealth of the Marcoses, it must find ways to settle the claims of the human rights victims during the martial regime of the dictator Marcos. After all, a majority of the victims are farmers who either dared to fight the dictatorship or became innocent victims of fascist abuses," PARDDS executive director Ricardo B. Reyes said in a statement.

"The present administration must take this rare opportunity given to it by this judicial victory to do justice to the farmers and human rights victims and complete the long-drawn agrarian reform program under CARP. It must continue to pursue the just fight to reclaim the remaining wealth which still remains gargantuan in size to the very end," Reyes added.

He called on the President to declare all "CARPable" lands under compulsory acquisition and to use the recovered Marcos loot to finance it.

Untouched

Reyes said huge landholdings, almost a million hectares of coconut, sugar and commercial crop plantations remained untouched to this day by the agrarian reform law.

The Land Bank of the Philippines earlier admitted that it would find it difficult to finance the land reform program this year and until 2008 when the CARP law expires. The Landbank said the government should earmark money for the program in the General Appropriations Act.

Former Sen. Heherson Alvarez, presidential adviser on overseas Filipino communities and co-author of the CARP law in 1988, said the P36 billion should be used to compensate both farmers eligible for agrarian reform and human rights claimants.

"There is no assurance that the human rights victims under martial law will be compensated because the law says otherwise. While we hail this victory against the abuses and plunder of the dictatorship, the agrarian reform law must first be amended for victims to assert their rightful claims," Alvarez said.

He said government must find a way to pursue land reform and indemnify human rights victims.

"Since 1987, the land reform program has remained insufficiently funded. This new fund will allow the government to pay landowners and help finance support services that will help CARP beneficiaries to be productive farm owners," Alvarez said.

PCGG wants to see Imelda put in jail

From page A1

amassing ill-gotten wealth together with her husband, the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Mrs. Marcos is facing nine counts of graft before the Sandiganbayan in connection with the secret Swiss accounts. The cases are in the trial stage.

"We would do our best to put Mrs. Marcos in jail because (the SC ruling) proves that the Marcoses stole money which is only being returned now," PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza said Tuesday night.

Yesterday, he pointed out that the high court had already found the Marcos Swiss accounts to be ill-gotten wealth.

"So the only question left in the Sandiganbayan is, 'Was there a crime committed?' And we're saying crimes were committed, corruption was committed," he said.

The PCGG is not deterred by Mrs. Marcos' old age. She recently turned 74.

"She can go to jail," Carranza emphasized.

Aside from the nine graft cases, Mrs. Marcos is also facing 33 counts of dollar-salting before the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 36.

PCGG officials will sit down with Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo today to review all the graft cases filed against the Marcoses and their cronies, led by Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. for ill-gotten wealth. According to PCGG records, several of these graft cases were dismissed by the previous Ombudsman, Aniano Desierto. The graft case filed against Cojuangco et. al. for illegally acquiring United Coconut Planters Bank using coco levy funds was among those dismissed.

But last Friday the Sandiganbayan ruled on the civil case involving UCPB, forfeiting the shares of Cojuangco et al. in the bank in favor of government.

PCGG officials and Marcelo have said they would revive as many criminal cases as they can, as long as these have not yet prescribed.

Imelda's foes

Marcos loyalists who dissociated themselves from his widow Imelda last year hailed the Supreme Court decision forfeiting the Marcos deposits now worth $682 million (about P36 billion) in favor of the government.

"We salute the Supreme Court for this important decision. It's time the Filipinos benefited from the Marcos wealth," Cherry Cobarrubias said.

Cobarrubias and several others who had served the Marcos couple for decades, even after the Marcos regime was ousted in 1986, publicly "disengaged". themselves from Mrs. Marcos at a time when she reportedly reached a huge compromise settlement over the ownership of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

They cited her failure to share the Marcos wealth with both Marcos loyalists and poor Filipinos, as she had promised.

But Cobarrubias said they remained devoted to Marcos.

"We disengaged from Imelda because she had not shared the Marcos wealth with the poor as she had repeatedly promised in her (electoral) campaigns," Cobarrubias said.

Cobarrubias said that before he died, Marcos had written: "My worldly possessions belong to the Marcos Foundation (and should be used) for the interest of the Filipino people."

But she said Imelda did not honor this.

Cobarrubias urged Imelda and her children to accept and respect the high court ruling. She also appealed to the government to "set aside" a portion of the money to compensate victims of human rights violations during the Marcos regime.

"We hope the government will not neglect the human rights victims. They should set aside a portion of the money to them so that there will already be a closure on the Marcos issue," she said.

Yorac: Yeheh

The government's back-to-back court victories—the SC decision on the Marcos Swiss deposits came five days after the Sandiganbayan decision on UCPB—couldn't have come at a better time for PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac.

Yorac came close to death a few months ago after a stroke and a cancer operation. She is still undergoing therapy at home.

PCGG Commissioner Vyva Aguirre broke the news over the phone to Yorac yesterday afternoon. Aguirre was about to leave for Yorac's house when she heard the news from Carranza.

"So I called up the chairperson immediately. I said, have you heard? The Supreme Court decision is out. She asked, We won? Yes, I said, we won. Yehey! She screamed," Aguirre related to reporters, in Filipino.

"She was very happy," she added.

Aguirre said the two cases were the closest to Yorac's heart.

When she assumed office in July 2001, Yorac told her commissioners she badly wanted to win two crucial cases.

"One is the coco levy case because it's the 'most immoral' of all. The coco levy assets are the most immorally acquired (ill-gotten wealth) because they were taken from the poorest of the poor.

"The other is the Swiss deposits because it will really show that the Marcoses stole from the Filipino people," Aguirre said.

On July 11, 2001, Carranza said they would try to get a ruling on the major cases within two years.

Carranza told reporters the PCGG will offer a thanksgiving Mass soon. *With reports from Dona Pazzibugan, Juliet Javellana and Armand N. Nocum*

Motion to inhibit

SPECIAL prosecutors are asking Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Gregory Ong to inhibit himself in the Imelda cases, after he allegedly commented that he was dismissing four graft charges against Mrs. Marcos.

Ong is the chair of the Sandiganbayan's 4th Division, which is trying criminal cases 22865 to 22870 that the government filed against Marcos in 1995.

The cases were filed against Mrs. Marcos for putting up and running foundations while serving as minister of Human Settlements.

The foundations—Aquamina Corp., Avertina Stiflung, Palmy Stiflung, Vibur Stiflung, Maler Foundation, and Arelma Inc.—turned out to be among the "front foundations" used by the Marcoses to stash alleged ill-gotten wealth.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the decision to get Ong off the Imelda case stemmed from a remark the anti-graft justice reportedly made in a social gathering.

"He reportedly commented that he was dismissing the case because the evidence was based on hearsay," Villa-Ignacio told Sandiganbayan reporters.

He said the comment had reached officials of the PCGG, who now say they are "no longer comfortable" having Ong hearing the case.

PCGG investigators discovered the Marcos accounts in Swiss banks in 1991.

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(In exact order)

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Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Tight drug watch on posh villages

By Alcuin Papa

THE POLICE have begun a tight watch on exclusive villages, mostly in southern Metro Manila, after the raid on at least three houses yielded stores of shabu and drug-making equipment.

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District director, yesterday told the INQUIRER that shabu manufacturers have been setting up illegal laboratories in well-situated houses because of the high security the villages have to offer.

He said that the security systems in most village tend to hinder police investigations.

"Houses in exclusive villages also favor drug producers since ... neighbors do not tend to bother each other," Gutierrez added.

The SPD chief said that he has ordered his men to intensify patrols in the villages and to link up with barangay officials and local security forces.

He also urged barangay officials to conduct a survey in their areas and report suspicious-looking residents or tenants.

Last Monday, police found a shabu laboratory inside a house in the exclusive Merville Subdivision in Parañaque City.

On Saturday, houses in Las Piñas City and in Silang, Cavite also yielded drugs and shabu-making equipment.

Illegal drugs on Tuesday were also found in a swank townhouse in Quezon City.

Four Chinese nationals and two Filipinos were arrested in the series of raids.

Police have identified Benito Sy as the key figure in the drug operations.

Sy is on the list of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency's "order of battle," where he is defined as a Level 1 personality.

Police said Sy, who is now the subject of a massive manhunt, has been using "decoys" to elude arrest.

Supt. Rolando Estilles, Parañaque police chief, yesterday told the INQUIRER that they were able to get two descriptions of Sy, whose rented house in Merville, Parañaque, was raided on Monday.

Elenora Dillera, owner of the Merville house which Sy had rented, provided the first description, Estilles said.

Dillera told police that in October last year, she was introduced to Sy by real estate broker Jovy Vivar.

According to Dillera, Sy is about 54 years old, 5-foot-4, thin and with cropped hair.

Dillera also said that when she met Sy, he was only wearing shorts and a sando shirt. He was also driving a beat-up owner-type jeep.

However, Michael Fandag, one of the helpers arrested in the raid on the shabu laboratory in Silang, Cavite, gave a different description of Sy.

According to Fandag, Sy was about 60 years old, with white hair, heavy set and looked very old.

Fandag told police that a few weeks ago, Sy had ordered him to go to the Merville house to transport some appliances.

"It seems that Sy is using decoys when facing people to hide his real identity," Estilles said.

Also, Estilles said they found a picture of Sy inside the Merville house. The man in the picture matched the description of Fandag.

But Estilles wants to be sure. He said he is due to interview Vivar.

According to the police, Sy used to run a fishing business in Navotas before he went bankrupt.

Desperate and penniless, Sy left for Taiwan where drug enforcers said he met and developed his "contacts" in the drug trade, probably members of the Chinese Triad groups.

DRUG HAUL
President Macapagal-Arroyo (left) goes over the laboratory equipment allegedly used in the manufacture of shabu in a Las Piñas warehouse. Above, a swank townhouse in Quezon City's Horseshoe Village has yielded about P1 billion worth of ephedrine, a key ingredient in the manufacture of shabu.
JOAN BONDOC, VAL HANDUMON

LATE SPORTS

Shell trips Sta. Lucia, stays alive

By June Navarro

SHELL rode on the heroics of rookie Eddie Laure and Tony Dela Cruz to shackle Sta. Lucia Realty, 87-76, last night in the qualifying round of the Samsung-PBA Invitational Championship at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Laure and Dela Cruz combined for 45 points to sustain the Turbochargers' game-long brilliance on the way to their second win in three outings. The Realtors fell into a tie with the Barangay Ginebra Kings at 1-1.

Shell's fate wrests entirely on the hands of the Aces, who beat the Turbochargers, 80-78, at the start of their invitationals campaign last week.

If the Aces succumb to Purefoods and the Gin Kings on Sunday, the Turbochargers could snag the last and final seat in the Invitationals.

Alaska ousted Purefoods, 99-79, in the second game. The Aces improved to 2-0 while pulling down the Hotdogs to 0-3.

Suspect grabs gun, slays policeman, wounds tanod

By Tina Santos

A POLICEMAN was slain while a volunteer watchman was seriously wounded while trying to arrest a robbery suspect in Quezon City Tuesday night.

The police identified the fatality as P01 Jorge Yadao, 27, detailed at Central Police District station 6 in Quezon City.

He succumbed to multiple gunshot wounds in the body.

Meanwhile, Anastacio Rogelio, 38, a barangay tanod and resident of Batasan Hills, Quezon City, sustained a lone gunshot wound in the chest and remains in serious condition at the East Avenue Medical Center.

Two of the four suspects, Delfin Sevilla, 39, house painter; and Venancio Sigon, 34, driver, both of Batasan Hills, were arrested. The two who remained at large were identified as Nemarsio Sevilla and Jojo Palayaban.

Investigation showed that a certain Danilo Fajardo sought the help of lawmen late Tuesday afternoon at about 6 p.m. after he spotted Palayaban, whom he said robbed him last week.

CPD Station 6 lawmen along with several barangay officials responded and saw Palayaban along Kingfisher Alley near Congressional Road, Batasan Hills.

The police said Palayaban saw them coming so he ran into the house of (Delfin) Sevilla.

When the law enforcers tried to run after the suspect, Sevilla reportedly blocked their way and engaged them in an argument as he tried to cover up for Palayaban.

Suddenly, Sevilla grabbed the gun of P01 Obet Añonuevo and began shooting at the policemen and tanods, hitting Yadao and Rogelio.

On Monday, patrolling lawmen arrested three robbers who had just robbed the passengers of a jeepney in Quezon City.

Arrested were Marvin Reyes, 24, of Intramuros, Manila; Reynaldo Roque, 31, and Wilfredo Villadores, 42, both of Sampaloc, Manila, a police report said.

The police said the robbery took place along Quezon Avenue, near Banawe Street at about 2:30 p.m.

As the suspects fled, some of their victims ran after them.

Patrolling lawmen saw them and joined the chase.

Edson Tandoc Jr.

Brothers slain in Calamba robbery

MONEY amounting to P300,000 led to the deaths of a pair of siblings in Calamba City on Tuesday.

Ariel Real, 28, and his older half-brother Albert Gutierrez, 31, both residents of Congressional Avenue in Quezon City, were shot to death by a lone gunman at about 3 p.m. on Tuesday, police said.

The two were used car dealers, according to Real's widow Laura Angelina.

Witnesses told Calamba police they had seen one of the victims struggling with another man for possession of a bag, believed to contain the money Real had withdrawn from a bank.

Calamba City police chief Senior Supt. Generoso Calderon said witnesses had seen a gray Mitsubishi Pajero (CST 191) enter the Palacio Real Subdivion in Barangay Makiling from the national highway. Minutes later the witnesses heard gunshots and saw the Pajero, driven by Gutierrez, going wayward until it hit a camachile tree.

Police said Gutierrez then fell out of the vehicle already dead from gunshot wounds.

Real tried to escape, but a gunman had chased him and had shot him several times in the body, witnesses told police.

The victims' mother, lawyer Carmencita Real, said that at about 8 a.m. that day, Jose Ma. Panlilio, whom she identified as a businessman and owner of a subdivision, had called their home looking for Gutierrez. She told police she chatted with Panlilio who had pawned to her a piece of property in Antipolo City. She then gave the phone to her son.

"I heard Abet (Gutierrez) tell Mr. Panlilio that they were interested in buying his Starex van, which the latter had pawned to a friend who lived somewhere in Laguna," the lawyer said.

Real's widow told police the brothers had made an agreement with Panlilio that they would redeem his Starex, which was pawned for P250,000. She said Panlilio had also agreed to sell the brothers the vehicle for P300,000.

Calamba policemen led by Senior Insp. Jimmy Masongsong went to Panlilio's residence at 1686 Dasmarinas Ave., Dasmarinas Village, Makati City at dawn yesterday, but failed to find him there. A domestic helper told them Panlilio had sold his Starex van a year ago.

At the Senerez Funeral Parlor here where the victims' bodies were brought, Real's daughter Dominique, 4, tried to comfort her mother who had embraced her husband's bloodied corpse tightly.

"Mama don't cry," the girl said. "Papa is just sleeping."

Marlon Ramos,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

METROBRIEFS

2 drug couriers fall

VIGILANCE paid off after two men were arrested while in possession of suspected shabu at the North Harbor in Manila and in Makati City. First arrested was Azis Sultan, 33, of Moicado, Marawi City, whose package of 300 grams of shabu was discovered by a drug-sniffing dog. He was stopped by Coast Guard personnel at about 2:30 p.m. Tuesday as he was boarding the Superferry 12 at Pier 4. Azis claimed that a certain Aziz Molanding of Quiapo asked him to bring the package to Cebu City in exchange for P60,000. In Makati, 47 grams of shabu was found on George Eyam of the Islamic Center in Quiapo. He was entering the Guadalupe Commercial Complex when security guard Rashied Sahid discovered the drugs during a routine frisking. ***Leila Salaverria and Margaux Ortiz***

Atienza targets sheds

MANILA Mayor Joselito Atienza yesterday said that he had ordered the removal of waiting sheds "illegally constructed" along his city's roads. According to him, the colorful sheds bedecked with billboards and advertisements were constructed without the permission of the city government. Claiming that the waiting sheds gave the city a "cluttered appearance" with some obstructing the sidewalks, Atienza vowed to demolish these "at all cost." ***Tarra Quismundo***

UP PGH employees rally

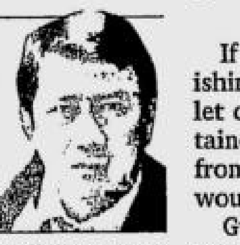
ABOUT 50 employees of the Philippine General Hospital yesterday staged a rally to demand the resignation of hospital director Juan Pablo Nañagas. Members of the All UP Workers Union also demanded the release of their anniversary bonus of P3,000, which has been held up for about a month. According to Jossell Ebesate, president of the UP Manila chapter of the labor union, Nañagas had poor management skills. But Nañagas said the union was just trying to get attention since he was already stepping down ahead of his term which ends in December. He claimed that the union was trying to make it appear that their protest would prompt him to leave his post. "They also know that I have already ordered the release of their bonus," Nañagas said. ***Tarra Quismundo***

Drunk and dead

A MAN was found dead in Makati City early yesterday morning after an all-night drinking spree with friends. Domingo Parone, 26, of 7688 Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati, was found slumped in a chair with a stab wound in the chest. Police said Parone also had a three-inch laceration on the neck. According to SPO1 Leweli Cristobal, his two drinking buddies left Parone sleeping in a chair outside his house when these went home at around 3 a.m. Parona's brother discovered his half-naked body at about 6:30 a.m., police said. Parone's family and neighbors said the victim did not have any known enemies in the area. ***Margaux Ortiz***

Shoot those Camp Crame guards

ON TARGET



Ramon Tulfo

POLICEMEN who were used to "planting" evidence on drug suspects will now think two, three, four, even a hundred times before doing that despicable act.

A new law, Republic Act 9165 or the Anti-Drug Law, penalizes with death law enforcers who plant drugs on innocent citizens.

With that law in effect, only the most notorious or stupid cops would frame up innocent citizens on drug charges.

* * *

In the past, anti-narcotics cops were notorious for planting evidence on former drug pushers who were already going straight.

People who had a history of taking drugs were "milking cows" of some anti-narcotics agents.

When reformed pushers would no longer give protection money to some cops because they were no longer earning from the illicit trade, that's when those cops planted evidence on them.

* * *

I've heard of instances where cops who got into a quarrel with their neighbors would plant drugs on the hapless citizens.

Second to vagrancy, the most commonly abused arrests made by cops on citizens are those of innocent people framed up on charges of illegal possession of weapons or drugs.

There also ought to be a law against cops planting weapons on unarmed citizens.

* * *

The newly passed Anti-Drug Law implemented on July 4 also penalizes judges and prosecutors who bungle drug cases with 12 years imprisonment.

Likewise, policemen who don't attend hearings where their testimony is vital to the prosecution of drug cases are liable. They, too, will be punished with 12 years in prison.

Drug traffickers and big-time pushers don't go to jail because they are able to bribe cops who arrested them into not attending hearings. If they can't bribe the cops, they bribe the prosecutors or judges.

* * *

Oh, for crying out loud!

No words can describe the police guards who allowed the escape of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi and two others from the supposedly heavily guarded jail of the Intelligence Group in Camp Crame.

The enraged citizenry can only say, @!#$%^&*+*&^%!!!

May lightning strike those corrupt guards!

* * *

If only a law could be passed punishing with instant death cops who let closely guarded prisoners or detainees escape, that Great Escape from Camp Crame jail on Monday would not be repeated.

Guards of death convicts or life-termers would risk being kicked out of the service or jailed for the big bribe they received from their erstwhile wards.

The best solution is to shoot the negligent guards on the spot. No investigations, no questions. Just shoot those bastards like wild chickens. This way, they won't be able to enjoy their bribe money.

* * *

That Great Escape from the Camp Crame jail was not the first of its kind. There have been other escapes from the supposedly well-guarded jail.

One such escape in the past involved Abu Sayyaf leader Khadaffy Janjalani who later led the much-publicized kidnapping of three Americans and other guests of Dos Palmas resort in Palawan.

The other involved Pentagon kidnap gang leader Faisal Marohombsar.

If I were Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., I would discreetly order the execution of those responsible for last Monday's escape.

* * *

I doff my hat to Ebdane for taking full responsibility for the escape of Indonesian Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, and Abu Sayyaf members Abdulmukim Edris and Omar Opik Lasal.

Al-Ghozi is one of those held responsible for the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Manila.

Unlike some leaders, Ebdane did not blame subordinates for the escape that greatly embarrassed his commander in chief, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The mark of a true leader is to say that the buck stops at his doorstep when things go wrong.

* * *

I also agree with Ebdane for not resigning from his post.

Resignation would have been taken as running away from the problem.

Is it Ebdane's fault some of his subordinates are corrupt, corruption being endemic to the PNP?

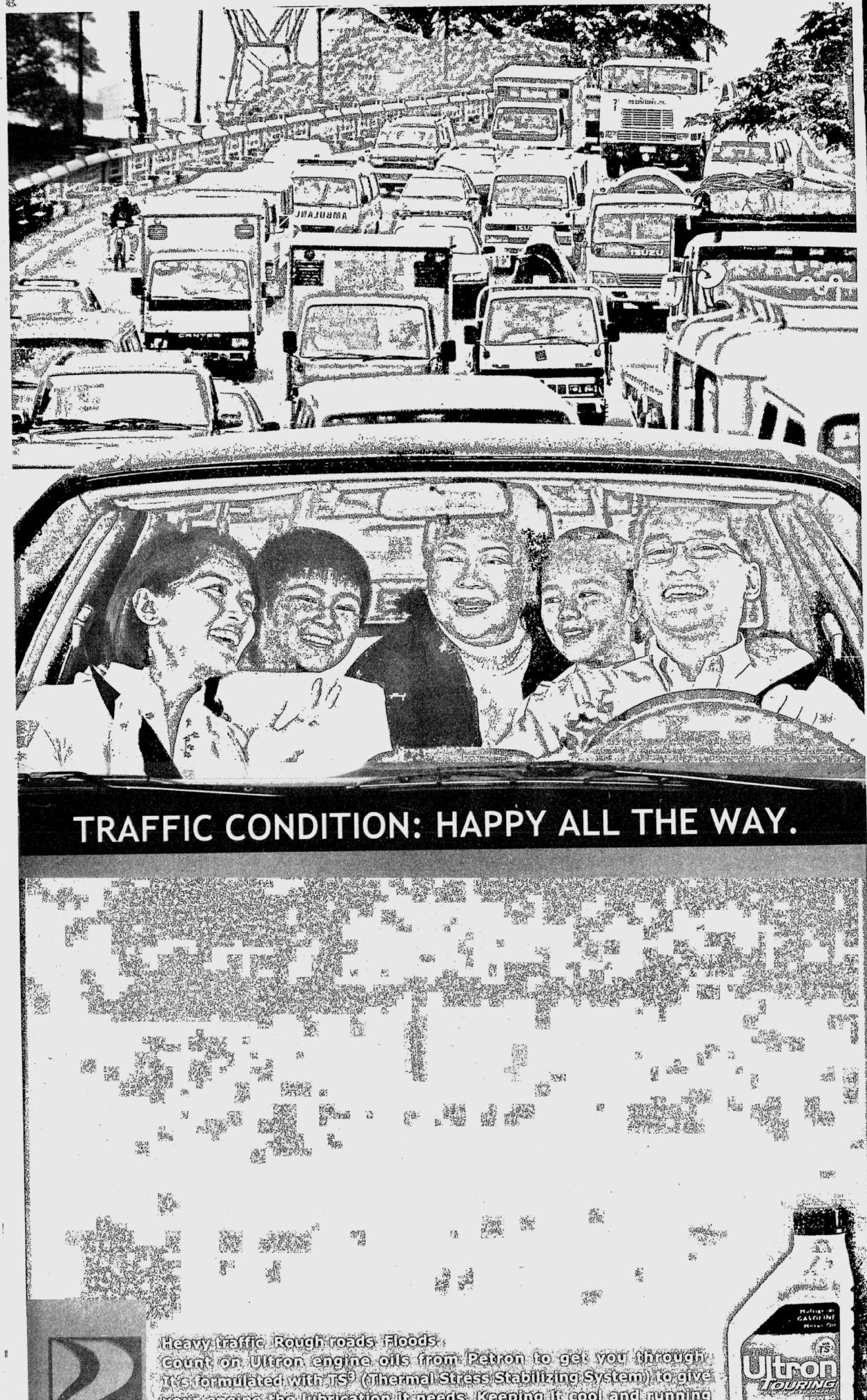
Apparently, Ebdane wants to show his critics that he's capable of having the escapees recaptured.

* * *

Whoever masterminded the Great Escape wants Ebdane kicked out so he can take over the PNP's top post.

There's talk the President is planning to extend Ebdane's term because of his excellent leadership and accomplishments.

But some of his successors can hardly wait, and so came up with that embarrassing escape.



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■ Malone, Payton ink deals with LA Lakers /A20

Bata vs Archer in pool

REYES: Out to regain world crown.
PDI PHOTO

FILIPINO aces Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante found their paths blocked by two worthy adversaries in the main draw of the 2003 World Pool Championship Wednesday night at the Cardiff International Arena in Cardiff, Wales.

Reyes, newly inducted into the Hall of Fame, faces two-time world champion and US Mosconi Cup captain Johnny Archer, while Bustamante, last year's runner-up, meets 1995 world titlist Oliver Ortmann of Germany as they banner the 8-man Philippine contingent in the 64-man money round.

The 49-year-old Reyes, winner of this event in 1999, beat Roxton Chapman (5-2) to sweep his seven games and top Group 4. Bustamante, Busan Asian Games gold medallist ruled Group 2 with a 6-win, 1-loss record following victories over Shawn Putnam (5-2) and Ivica Putnik (5-4).

Another Filipino, Marlon Manalo, matched Reyes' feat by hurdling Haruyoshi Hinokiyama (5-4) and Pascal Budo (5-2) to sweep Group 5. The former Asian snooker champion from Mandaluyong City tangles with Ernesto Dominguez.

Other Filipinos who advanced were Southeast Asian Games gold medallists Warren Kiamco (5-2 in Group 9) and Lee Vann Corteza (6-1 in Group 10), Ramil Gallego (6-1 in Group 9), Dennis Orcullo (4-3 Group 14) and Busan Asian Games champion Antonio Lining (6-1 in Group 16); making them the biggest contingent in the knockout stages. United Kingdom also has eight qualifiers but it paraded a 15-man squad in the $300,000 (P16 million) event.

Only US-based qualifier Ronnie Alcano failed to advance among the Filipinos, finishing with a 1-6 mark in Group 4.

Kiamco will be battling Luxembourg's Marc Holtz while Corteza will be tackling Sweden's Sten Jarledal in the round of 64. Gallego is slated to tangle with Russian Evgeny Stalev while Orcullo is set to meet American Max Eberle. Lining will be tangling with Japanese Haruyoshi Hinokiyama.

Alex Pagulayan, a Filipino carrying Canada's colors, and Germany's Ralf Souquet, 1996 world champion and winner of the recent RP-Europe Challenge held in Quezon City, also posted perfect 7-0 scores in the four-day elimination round. Pagulayan, who emerged the top seed with only 14 racks conceded in the eliminations, will be facing Japanese Shintaro Sugaya.

Play shifts to race to 9, winner breaks, with all qualifiers assured of at least $1,500 (P80,000).

Meanwhile, Rene Encarnacion, senior vice president of ABS-CBN Global Ltd., represented Reyes when he was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Billiards Congress of America last Saturday at the Venetian Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Encarnacion represented Reyes at the request of Puyat Sports president Aristeo "Putch" Puyat.

"Efren has made us all proud and raised the image of the Filipino internationally. His image is now included in the pantheon of BCA Hall of Fame," said Encarnacion, who accepted the green Hall of Fame jacket, ring and plaque for Reyes.

2 NSAs asked to file lineups

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee yesterday gave an ultimatum on two national sports associations to submit their lineup and accompanying justification to the SEAG technical commission which is close to wrapping up the final composition of the RP delegation to the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games.

This came about after the associations of badminton and basketball failed to show up at the SEAG technical commission offices despite previous schedules. They are given until Wednesday next week to give their roster, show credentials and discuss their chances.

Though the technical body maintained that there will be no penalty on the NSAs, it said that delays on submission of lineups could take its toll on the preparation of the entire RP delegation.

POC first vice president Steve Hontiveros, who is the chair of technical body, said the two associations will have to appear next week along with those of football, cycling, aerobics, weightlifting and swimming, which are still trying to include more athletes to the delegation.

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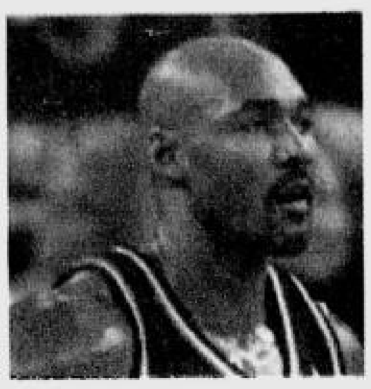
Malone, Payton ink deals with Lakers



MALONE

LOS ANGELES—Future Hall of Fame inductees Karl Malone and Gary Payton signed contracts with the Los Angeles Lakers shortly after midnight Wednesday.

A moratorium on free agent signings expired Tuesday night. Beginning at 12:01 a.m. EDT time, free agents were allowed to sign contracts.

Malone, the second-leading scorer in NBA history who is considered perhaps the greatest power forward ever, signed a two-year contract worth just over $3 million, Lakers spokesman John Black said.

Malone, who earned $19 million last season in his 18th and final season with the Utah Jazz, will earn the veteran's exception of $1.5 million next season. He turns 40 later this month.

Payton, five years younger, also signed a multiyear contract. He established himself as one of the NBA's finest point guards in Seattle, where he played for nearly 12 seasons before being traded to Milwaukee this past season.

The players will be introduced Thursday morning at a news conference at Staples Center.

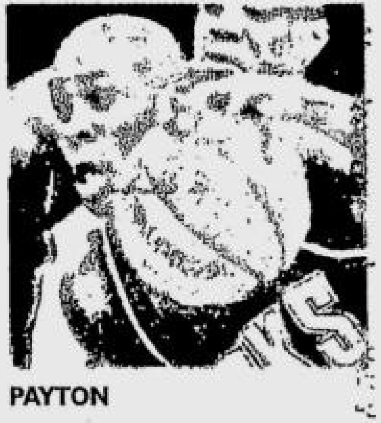
Payton, who earned $12 million last season, will make $4.9 million in his first year with the Lakers.

Malone and Payton will join Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant in a star-studded Lakers lineup.

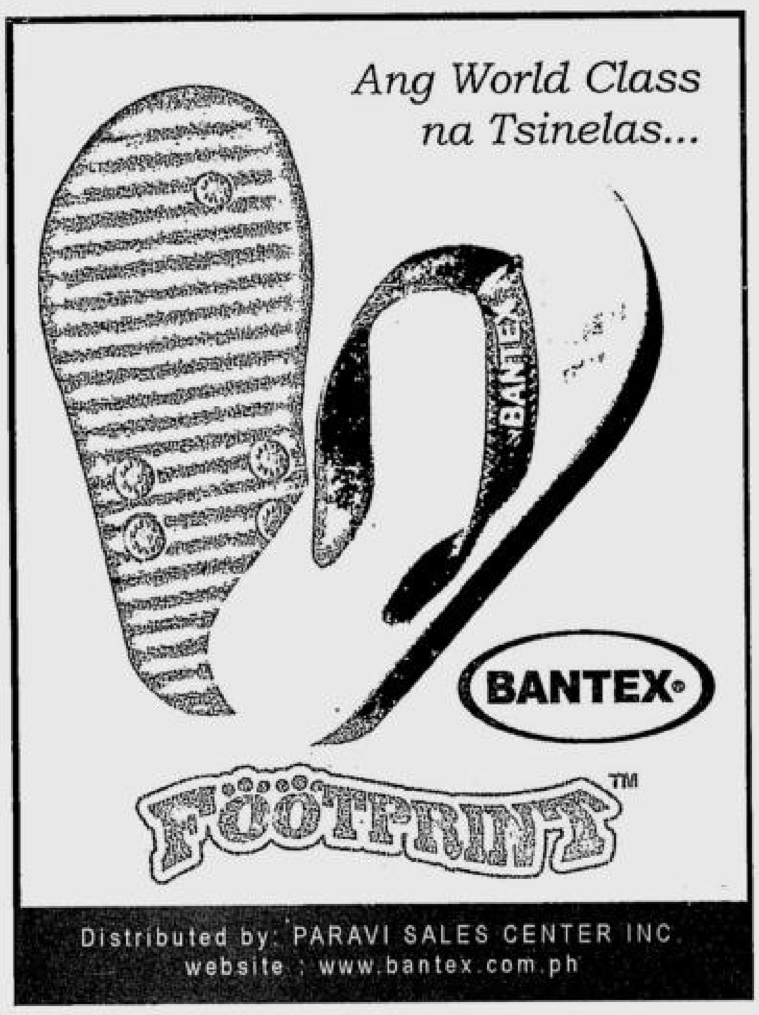
Meanwhile, the NBA salary cap for the 2003-04 season will be almost $44 million, a jump of about 9 percent from last season.

The new salary cap figure of $43.84 million is the highest in NBA history.

In New York, Chamique Holdsclaw had 24 points and 13 rebounds as the Washington Mystics snapped an 11-game losing streak in the WNBA Tuesday with a 77-64 win over the New York Liberty. *AP*



PAYTON



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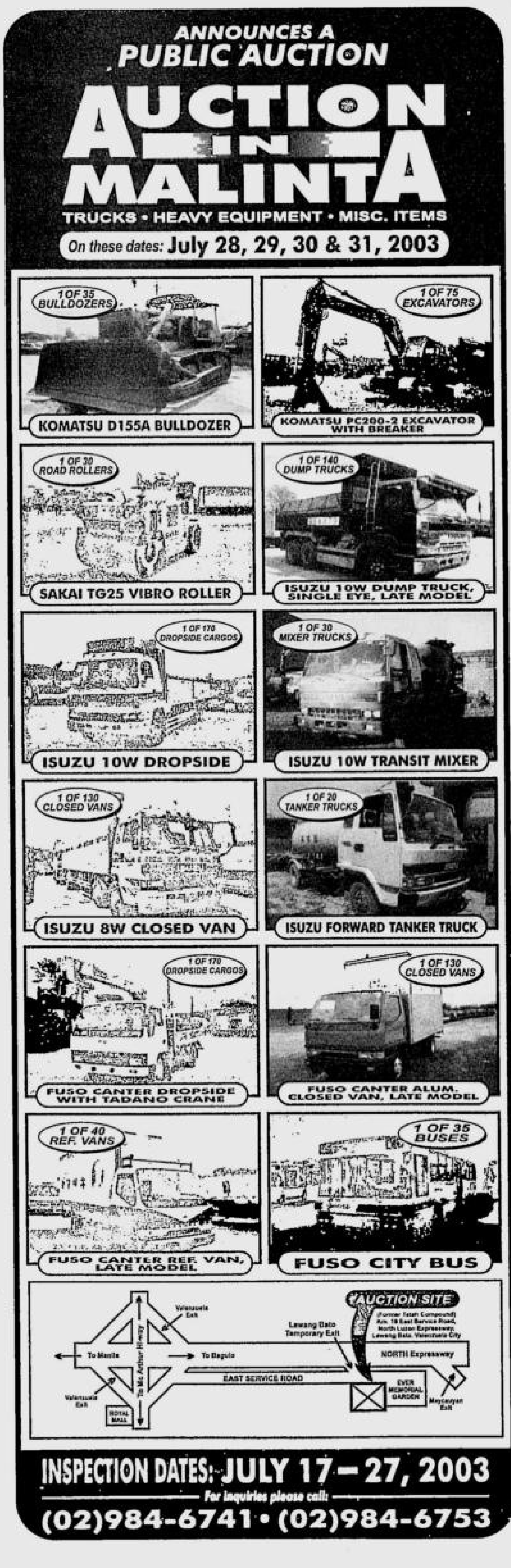

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Stags nip Cards; JRU up

GAMES TOMORROW (*Rizal Coliseum*)
11:30 a.m.—PCU vs UPHR
4 p.m.—CSB vs SBC

By June Navarro

MARK Legarde completed a fastbreak play with two seconds left, lifting San Sebastian College to a thrilling 63-61 win over erstwhile leader Mapua yesterday in NCAA basketball at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The 6-foot-4 Legarde received an outlet pass from playmaker Michael Gonzales right after Mapua's Hermes Sumalinog tied the game at 61 with a triple that everybody thought would pave the way for an overtime.

As the Mapua gallery erupted in delight after Sumalinog's basket, Gonzales wasted no time getting the ball into play and quickly rifled a pass to a streaking Legarde for the game-clinching twinner.

It caught the Cardinals by surprise, leaving Mapua's Ryan Malig no choice but to make a desperate heave that bounced off the glass as time eventually ran out.

"It was simply presence of mind on the part of Gonzales. Legarde, on the other hand, atoned for some of the easy baskets he missed early in the game," said San Sebastian College coach Turo Valenzona, whose Stags bounced back from a disappointing loss against Letran and tied their victims at 3-2.

In the other senior game, Jose Rizal University withstood a fierce Letran rally to win, 78-67, and claim the solo leadership. The Bombers' fourth straight victory after an opening-day loss against SSC installed them at the top while the Knights fell in a triple tie with the Cardinals and the Stags.

Scores:

SSC-R 63—Baluyot 17, Uy 11, Legarde 8, Gonzales 7, Najorda 7, Vicente 6, Aguilar 4, Rebuya 2, Estole 1, Maneclang 0, Reveche 0, Santos 0, Alcaraz 0.

MIT 61—Gonzales 10, Sumalinog 9, Malig 9, Salud 7, Dula 7, Guevarra 7, Cruz 6, David 2, Veranga 2, Martin 2, Co 2, Del Rosario 0.

Quarters: 9-11, 21-26, 40-41, 63-61.

Banal faces Banal today

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
11 a.m.—UST vs NU (Jrs)
2 p.m.—UST vs NU (Srs)
4 p.m.—Ateneo vs FEU (Srs)

BANAL versus Banal comes into focus as titlist Ateneo tries to bounce back after an opening-day setback when it collides with Far Eastern University in the UAAP men's basketball championship today at the Big Dome.

Coaching sensation Joel Banal takes his familiar role as Ateneo coach and will trade wits with younger brother Koy, FEU's chief bench tactician, as the Eagles battle the Tamaraws at 4 p.m.

NU meets UST at 2 p.m. in the other senior encounter. *Dennis Eroa*

Dive Shoppe keeps lead; PDI bets win

DIVE SHOPPE stormed to third consecutive victory Tuesday night to keep solo lead in the first Sportshouse Corporate and Celebrity Cup Invitational Badminton tournament at the Yellow Feather Badminton Center in Libis, Quezon City.

Dive Shoppe scored a 5-0 rout of Richard Ellis through the victories by Teng Dayan and Alma Bringas over Anali Arcinas and Carol Halili, 11-8, 11; Dave Santos and Glenn Molino over Kingson Sian and Vengco Salvador, 15-4, 15-6; Gina Flores and Jhona Magnaye over Charina Se and Heidi Labrador, 11-2, 11-7; Jingle Chan and Jeh Gloria over Raffy dela Rosa and Joey Radovan, 15-4, 15-1; and Willy Agbulos and Emma Agbulos over John Aquino and Charmaine Radovan, 11-4, 11-8.

In its second outing, Dive Shoppe whipped Nokia, 4-1, with Willy Agbulos and Emma Agbulos losing to Martin Fernandez and Beth Ng, 2-11, 7-11, in the mixed doubles open division.

Crossover-HSBC, Asian Development Bank and Bingo Bonanza Corporation also hurdled their separate rivals to remain unbeaten in two matches in this event co-presented by Dunlop Slazenger Phils. and sponsored by Quantum Global, Robson-Sportscraft, Ultramax, Lino's Food and Entertainment and Ratsky's.

Crossover-HSBC leaned on the impressive shows of Rose Tantoco, Angel Yu, Mark Paz, Odie Bautista, Christine Magsusi, Theresa Miranda, Mac Saldua, Paolo Mapale, Ginggoy Lotho and Marge Maceda to tally a 5-0 win over Dupont Pioneer Chemicals.

ADB posted a 4-1 win over Procter and Gable Alpha behind the formidable tandem of Ces Tuason and Guia de Guzman.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer, bannered by Maan Herrera, Mercy Florencio, Arsenio Laurel, Dave Valdez, Amanda Carpo, Gem Padilla, Raymond Rufino, Isabel Barangeran, Raul Marcelo, John Nery and Judy Yin, bounced back with a 4-1 win over Procter and Gamble Beta, 4-1, and a 5-0 thrashing of Dupont Pioneer Chemicals to improve its record to 2-1.

Nokia regained its form and clobbered Philippine National Bank, 4-1, for its second win in three games.

The top eight teams after the elimination round will advance to the quarterfinals which will be held at the SM Megamall Atrium tomorrow.

NCR teams sweep Streetball Finals

NATIONAL Capital Region bet Team Argonaut of the University of Santo Tomas edged Team Accord of University of San Carlos, 19-17, to lead the winners at the close of the 2003 adidas Streetball Challenge National Finals at the Glorietta Activity Center last Sunday.

Team Accord forced a shootout following a jumper by Nino Ramirez but Team Argonaut relied on its impeccable freethrow shooting to claim the seniors division title.

Anthony Espiritu of Team Argonaut was named adidas Most Valuable Player.

In the girls' division, NCR's Team Glide of Adamson University beat Team Gandor of USC, 14-10, to bag its second consecutive title.

Merenciana Arayi scored seven of the Lady Falcon's 14 points, including three in a crippling 5-0 salvo that carried her team to victory. Chosen MVP was Arayi's teammate, Jenalyn Constantino

Another Big City squad–Team Bermuda—ruled the juniors category after edging Team Bolt, 14-13, behind the heroics of MVP John Carlos Hermida, who pumped in 10 points.

Crowd favorite Ateneo de Manila downed Ateneo de Davao, 22-19, to top the midgets division.

John David Dumrique led all scorers with 14 points and had 5 rebounds en route to claiming the MVP award.

The adidas Streetball Challenge 2003 was co-presented by Globe Gentext in cooperation with WG&A, adidas fragrance and body care for men, Powerade, Viva mineral water, Café Lupe, Cebu Pacific, Milo, Warner Music, Café Lupe, Ford, Purefoods Corned Beef, Snickers, Pink magazine, Chalk magazine, Studio 23. Magic 89.9 DWTM and 99.5 RT

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

GOLF: 2003 British Open Preview; 8:30 a.m. (r * 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.); First Round; 5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.; ESPN: 10:30 p.m.; RPN 9 * Golf's third major tees off from Kent in jolly old England.

POOL: World Pool Championship 2003; Day 5, 1st Session; 7 a.m. (r); Star Sports; 10 a.m. (r); ESPN; Day 5, 2nd Session; 12 noon (r); Star Sports; 2 p.m. (r); ESPN; Day 6, 1st Session; 9 p.m.; 2nd Session; tomorrow at 2 a.m.; Star Sports * The field is further trimmed down as the action continues from Cardiff, Wales.

BASKETBALL: Shock vs Fever; 8 a.m. (r * 9 p.m.); Solar Sports * Detroit clashes with Indiana in this eastern match * up.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

SPORTSWATCH

Armstrong looks forward to ITT

MARSEILLE, France—Lance Armstrong is looking ahead as much as he is over his shoulder. With rivals pressuring him more than last year, the four-time Tour de France champion held the overall lead by a handful of seconds following Tuesday's 10th stage. The Texan is by no means clear of the chasing pack, and feels Friday's upcoming individual time trial could make or break his bid for a record-equaling fifth straight Tour. In the 10th stage, Armstrong finished in a large pack of riders who completed the 219.5-kilometer (136-mile) stage from Gap to the southern port city of Marseille way behind Danish winner Jakob Piil of Team CSC. *AP*

Anderson sparks AL stars victory

CHICAGO—Garret Anderson came to Chicago this week as the quiet cog that propels the Anaheim Angels. He left with a national reputation as a home run hitter. One night after his surprise win in the Home Run Derby, Anderson started the American League comeback with a two-run homer and was voted the first Ted Williams Most Valuable Player of the All-Star game after getting three hits in a 7-6 victory. "It's been a good year, and this year's not over yet," he said. Anderson's been somewhat of a secret on the national stage, not even making an All-Star team until last year. *AP*

Golden girl Cathy Freeman retires

FREEMAN

BRISBANE, Australia—Family and friends often told Cathy Freeman that regardless of what she achieved in the rest of her running career, nothing could top her 2000 Sydney Olympic performance. The Aboriginal runner lit the opening ceremony flame and 10 days later won the 400-meter gold in the same stadium, before an Olympic record 112,500 crowd. Nearly three years later, the shy but often controversial Freeman agreed, saying when she announced her retirement in London late Tuesday that she no longer had the desire or drive to continue competing. *AP*

Seaba-bound RP Youth cagers named

AN 18-man national pool for the RP Youth-Burlington squad that will represent the country in the SEABA Junior Championship in 2004 has been finally chosen. Now undergoing intensive training daily at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum under coaches Johnny Tam, Ching Ching Marcelino, Dayong Mendoza and Brit Reroma are Michael Vincent Baldos, Michael Galinato, Peter Aguilar, Daryl Bautista, Kevin Astorga, Lawrence Dulawan, Luis Lopez, Dylan Ababou, Chris Matsumuto of Metro Manila, Francis Allera of Gen San, Gino Etrone, Rodel Raneses, Alvin Calayatud of Davao, Mark Eubank of Zamboanga, Eric Yanlung, Angelo Canlas of Pampanga, Jervy Cruz of Nueva Ecija and Harvey Aquino of Laguna. The team is sponsored by Burlington socks, Hanford, LA Gear, Sportshouse, Dunlop Slazenger, SMC, Fab, Bally and Puma Socks.

Anniversary derby resumes today

THE SECOND-ROUND eliminations of Pasay City Cockpit's "Anniversary 5-Cock Derby" blasts off at 2 p.m. today with another jam-packed crown expected to attend. A total of 80 entries saw action last Tuesday. The three-day cockfest, sponsored by Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forte and Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, will also feature the championship round on Saturday. At stake is at least P1 million, while entry fee is P15,000. Pasay Cockpit is regarded as the busiest in Metro Manila. For other details, please contact 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

Lagon gets top award tomorrow

THE United Cockers Association of the Philippines, in cooperation with Lakpue Drug Inc., will present the "UCAP Cocker of the Year 2003" award to engineer Sonny Lagon tomorrow (July 18) at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City. Lagon's bet, JT JBB Blue Blade, garnered a total of 56 points in 12 UCAP derbies held at Mandaluyong Coliseum. He will receive an elegant trophy donated by Red Gel Forte. Former ambassador Danding Cojuangco (Bumble Bee Balbina) was runner-up with 49.5 points. Meanwhile, UCAP's busy schedule starts on Sept. 2 and 4 with Biboy Enriquez serving as host to the UCAP 7-Stag Derby. For details, call 535-2341 and 534-4110.

GameworX anniversary bash July 19

LEADING amusement center GameworX will celebrate its fifth year anniversary on Saturday (July 19) with the presentation and awarding of the "GameworX Fab Five" at the RinX, 4th level of Festival Supermall, Filinvest Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit and commissioner William Ramirez as well as GameworX officials Jesus Avecilla Jr. (president), Christian Datol (marketing manager) and Divina Yabut (general manager) will grace the event that will start at 6 p.m.

WORLD JUNGOLF

Strong start by RP entries

By Jong Arcano

SAN DIEGO, California—A deluge of Philippine threats emerged on a stirring day when Wolen Juan Superal bucked his putting woes to deliver a promise, keeping himself just a stroke behind the boys 9-10 years leader after a three-under-par 55 Tuesday in the opening round of the Callaway Junior World golf championships in various venues here.

Living up to expectations, the RP contingent put on its strongest start in the annual event since a memorable double victory in 1983 as John Kier Abdon (boys 11-12 years) and Ma. Christina Potenciano and Andie Unson (girls 6-8 years) also got themselves in the mix in their respective divisions.

The 10-year-old Superal came out of a fiery shootout at the sun-baked Pine Glen course with a five-birdie, two-bogey round at Singing Hills—which yielded 18 sub-par scores—to be among four boys breathing down the neck of American Cameron Wilson.

Abdon, 10, also scored a three-under 69 at the Lawrence Welk Resort course while Poveda gradeschoolers Potenciano and Unson tallied a 55 and 56, respectively, at Presidio Hills to occupy the second and third positions in their age-group.

Only Los Angeles bet Alison Lee (54) scored better than Potenciano and the lesser-known Unson due to the conditions of the course that make recovery shots from around the green very difficult.

Abdon, playing out of St. Benedict-Alabang, went on a birdie-birdie-birdie windup for his own three-under 69 and ended the cold, foggy day just two strokes behind South Carolina's William Ovenden sharing second place with five others.

Dottie Ardina, who claimed the country's 14 title here last year by winning 6-8 years crown , buried so many clutch putts coming home to salvage a 61 and keep her qualifying hopes alive in her division where only eight of only 29 entries will remain after today's round.

The most prominent member of the RP contingent backed by Philippine Airlines, Samsung, Airlift Asia and Philippine Sports Commission was in ninth place, seven shots behind Tanya Wadhwa of India who opened with a five-under 54.

So many others waged a determined battle including Miko Alejandro who was tied for ninth but only four strokes back in the boys 13-14 years and Jayvie Agojo, tied for 15th, whose 76 was marred by four three-putt miscues at Torrey Pines South.

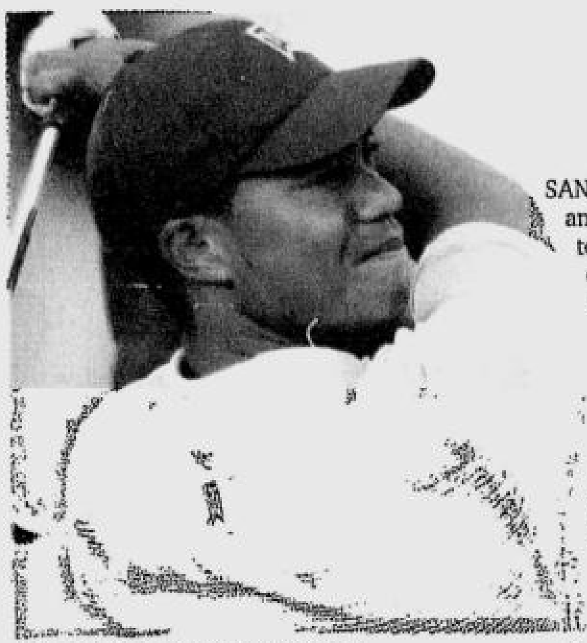
Alejandro matched par 72 that could have been better if not for an bad 3-iron tee-shot that went out-of-bounds on the par-3 final hole.

Matet Salivio' 77 also at Torrey Pines South was spiked by her first-ever hole-in-one feat using a wedge on the third hole.

Also impressive were Justin Tambunting who bogeyed the last two holes and settled for a 75 at Torrey Pines North—site of the 2008 US Open—and Geleen Handog's 76 in the girls 13-14 years class.

"We couldn't have asked for a better start from the kids. We hope we could sustain the drive," said Jungolf president Gerry Handog of a no-nonsense bid to duplicate the twin victories of Ramon Brobio and Carito Villaroman 20 years ago.

Miguel Tabuena, his famous uncle Martin Nievera among those cheering him on, was the best-placed RP entry in the boys 6-8 years play with his 57. He was eight strokes adrift of solo leader Ben Doyle of San Diego.



WOODS: Western Open winner. AP

Woods-Els duel brews at Royal St. George's

SANDWICH, England—Tiger Woods and Ernie Els have everything it takes to form a major rivalry except for one critical piece—a Sunday showdown at a major championship.

Royal St. George's might be the perfect place to start.

Woods, without a major trophy for the first time in four years, shot down any suggestions he was in a slump two weeks ago by going wire-to-wire for a five-stroke victory in the Western Open, his fourth victory of the season.

Els responded by leading from start to finish to win by five strokes at the Scottish Open last week at Loch Lomond, his fifth victory of the year.

They arrived at the British Open on top of their games, a collision long overdue.

Might this finally be the week?

"Yeah, I think so," Els said Tuesday. "Tiger is playing really well. And I think from all the press he's getting—not winning a major in a year, which I think is ridiculous—I think he's going to try to prove something and have a good week." *AP*

SOLAR Sports will telecast the 2003 British Open live on RPN-9 starting with round one today (Thursday, July 17) at 10:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. The succeeding rounds will be aired on Friday (12:30 a.m.-2:30 a.m.), Saturday (7 p.m.-1:50 a.m.) and Sunday (8 p.m.-1 a.m.). Highlights will be shown Saturday starting at 4 p.m.

The person, not the title

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

TIGER, not titles.

That's what separates Tiger Woods from the rest of planet golf's inhabitants.

Woods is without a major title now, zero-of-four from the world's majors, but never will we doubt Tiger's ability to win again. His mystique leaves us with no choice but to root for him to win again.

Title or no title, Woods remains as admirable as ever. The most saleable even. Bookmakers both in Las Vegas and London have made him 5-to-1 to win the British Open this week.

Titles do not only beautify one's resume, yes, they also fatten one's bankbook.

Only a while back, Tiger Woods held all four majors at the same time. As a result, his endorsements rose to nearly $100 million; winnings from 38 victories alone, eight of them majors, had risen to $22 million.

Tiger is without a major now, although he has won four tournaments—the most by any golfer—this year. Woods' last major (US Open) had been snatched four weeks back by Jim Furyk, a man whose swing is the exact opposite of Tiger's near-flawless swing.

But even as Tiger Woods tees off today in the British Open not a holder of any major, he will remain, I repeat, the prohibitive favorite to unseat Ernie Els, the big South African with the lovely moniker "Big Easy."

A towering hunk at 6-foot-4, Els has a swing as soft as talcum power, as smooth as silk.

In contrast, Woods, an inch below six feet, has a swing that roars like, yes, a tiger.

If you hear a lullaby from Els' stroke, it's a snarl, if not a growl, from Woods'.

You see gentleness from Els' swing, roughness from Woods'.

If Els mesmerizes, Woods devours.

Els has said, after winning the Scottish Open by five strokes on Tuesday with a 17-under-par total, that he is ready for Woods.

"Tiger is the number one player in the world," said Els. "But I feel I can compete against him. I feel I can take up the challenge better than I have in the past."

Woods selects his tournaments in advance, although he gives priorities to the four majors. He is golf's Lance Armstrong, the American legend who competes only in major cycling events; Armstrong is seeking a record-equaling fifth straight Tour de France crown, a feat scored in the '90s by Spaniard Miguel Indurain.

One time, when Woods wasn't winning tournaments after having won a major, he was asked: "Don't you feel you are now in a slump?"

Woods' answer: "Winning one major a year isn't bad isn't it?"

There is wisdom in being selective.

For one, it helps you kill the clutter in your brain (golf is mental, remember). Too many tournaments to think about will sometimes render your motor brain sting-free, if not useless.

For another, golf is a very exhausting game. It's energy-sapping. Look what happened to Lunke, the US Ladies Open champion; she got cut in the Canadian Open the week right after winning the Open. In the same tournament, Annika Sorenstam, the world No. 1, quit after nine holes—complaining of fatigue-induced illness.

You can fight physical pain, but not brain drain; exhaustion drains brain juices. If machines suffer from metal fatigue, us humans also suffer from mental fatigue.

Also in the starting field in the British Open today are those who took away Woods' three other majors—Rich Beem (PGA), MikeWeir (Masters) and Furyk (US Open).

All three, like Els, are natural contenders for the British Open, the mother of all golf tournaments. Of course, many more are expected to crowd the favorites; golf's unpredictability makes for a vista of aspirants whose chances of victory are as finite as the blades of grass that dot the Royal St. George of Sandwich, Scotland; this is the same course where Greg Norman won the Open the last time it was held there in 1993.

I am glad that Solar Sports has partnered anew with RPN-9 to telecast the event from today up to Sunday. I have reason to drink more than my usual quota of drop—four days in a row.

How about that for a change?

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As you're steering, we'll keep you revved-up with knockout nightly performances top-billed by the lovely Ciara Sotto and the sultry Viva Hot Babes. Nonstop thrills begin as we officially launch our new name – from Prestige Cars, Inc. (Libis) to Autohaus BMW – and our new BMW showroom, the country's biggest to complement the largest aftersales facilities and latest state-of-the-art equipment. Add to that a motorcade, golf tournament, F1 viewing, and complimentary cocktails at Zeno Bar, the country's first and only BMW lifestyle lounge.

So come and indulge yourself at Autohaus BMW where driving, along with everything else, is meant to be experienced.

Xpo Highlights

17 • **2003 BMW Golf Cup International Autohaus BMW Dealer Qualifying Tournament.** Awarding ceremonies hosted by Johnny Litton.
• **Autohaus BMW Grand Launch.** An evening of cocktails and sizzling entertainment by the lovely Ciara Sotto and sultry Viva Hot Babes.

18 • **"Sheer Proof"** – Armando Fabia's Dare-To-Wear Fashion Collection.

19 • **BMW Motorcade.** Motorcade from Autohaus BMW, Libis to Alabang and back. Featuring the BMW Motorrad, solely distributed by Autohaus BMW. Led by the BMW Z Club Philippines and BMW Owner's Society (BOSS); open to all BMW owners.
• **Acoustic Evening at Zeno,** featuring "Niche".

20 • **Family program.** Fun & frolic featuring balloon twisting, face painting, magic show.
• **Formula 1 Viewing.** Catch the British Grand Prix action live from Silverstone on larger-than-life screens complete with ear-splitting surround sound and toast the winning team with complimentary food and drinks.

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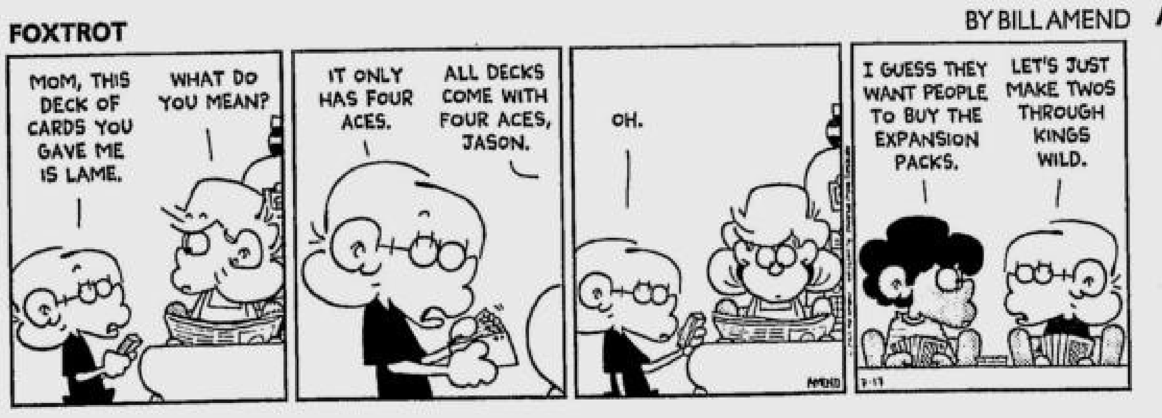
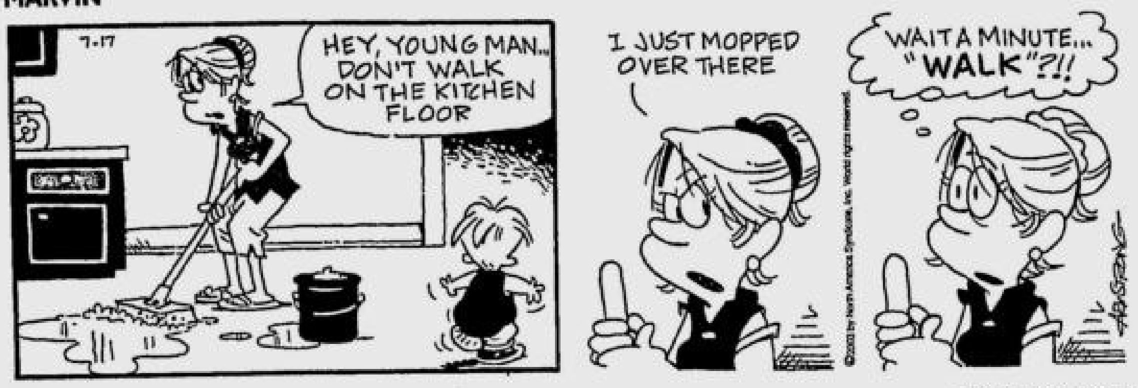
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


MOM, THIS DECK OF CARDS YOU GAVE ME IS LAME.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IT ONLY HAS FOUR ACES.
ALL DECKS COME WITH FOUR ACES, JASON.
OH.
I GUESS THEY WANT PEOPLE TO BUY THE EXPANSION PACKS.
LET'S JUST MAKE TWOS THROUGH KINGS WILD.
AMEND
7-17

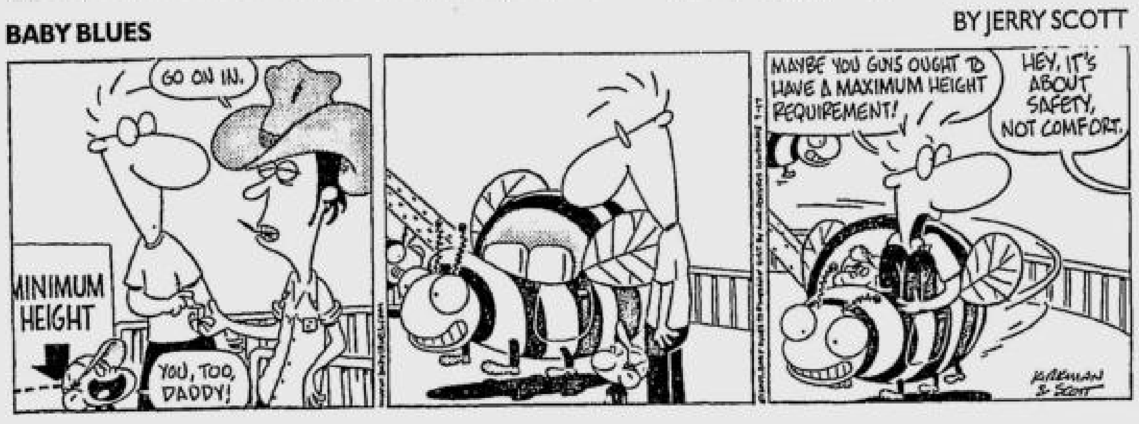
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


7-17
HEY, YOUNG MAN.. DON'T WALK ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR
I JUST MOPPED OVER THERE
WAIT A MINUTE... "WALK"?!!
ARMSTRONG

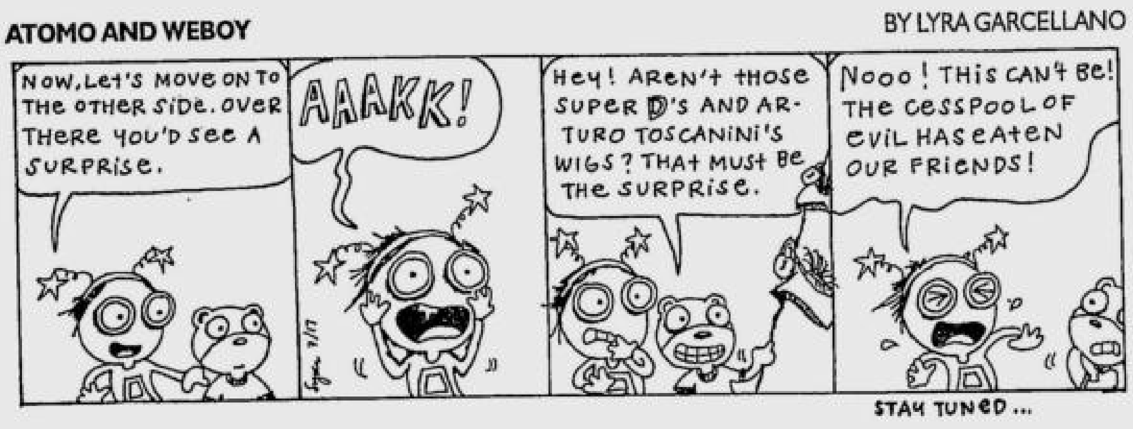
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


GO ON IN.
MINIMUM HEIGHT
YOU, TOO, DADDY!
MAYBE YOU GUYS OUGHT TO HAVE A MAXIMUM HEIGHT REQUIREMENT!
HEY, IT'S ABOUT SAFETY, NOT COMFORT.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Now, Let's move on to the other side. Over there you'd see a surprise.
AAAKK!
Hey! Aren't those Super D's and Arturo Toscanini's wigs? That must be the surprise.
Nooo! This can't be! The cesspool of evil has eaten our friends!
STAY TUNED...

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Beneath your cosmopolitan, sophisticated mask, you are a serious, ambitious individual. You want to rise to the top. To do this you need to be in control of your life and your work. Your self-confidence is the secret to your success. This year focuses on your closest relationships. Marriage and divorce are possibilities.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): During the morning, you might feel briefly irritable. If so, do not bring up discussions that are critical or important for you, because you could blow it. (Not good.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): At times you are stubborn (and you know it). If a friend challenges you today, you won't back down without a fight. Remember to be reasonable, because in the long run you need this friend.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're suddenly seized by feelings of ambition and power. You might want to quit your job and do something rash. Think twice, because this feeling vanishes quickly.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): For some reason, you want to escape your daily routine today. You want a change of scenery. Try to do something about this. Visit different shops, restaurants or parks.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're not in the mood to share your goods with others today. In fact, you feel possessive and downright territorial. Fortunately, this feeling passes. Good, because this is not how you usually are.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You want to win an argument with someone today. Your desire for victory could cloud your common sense. Don't be too hasty to defend your point of view.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're so excited about getting things done at work today that you might become a tad bossy. Of course, you might not see this, but others certainly will!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your passions are aroused today! If you have a secret love, you will now experience strong feelings for this individual. You want romance in your life.

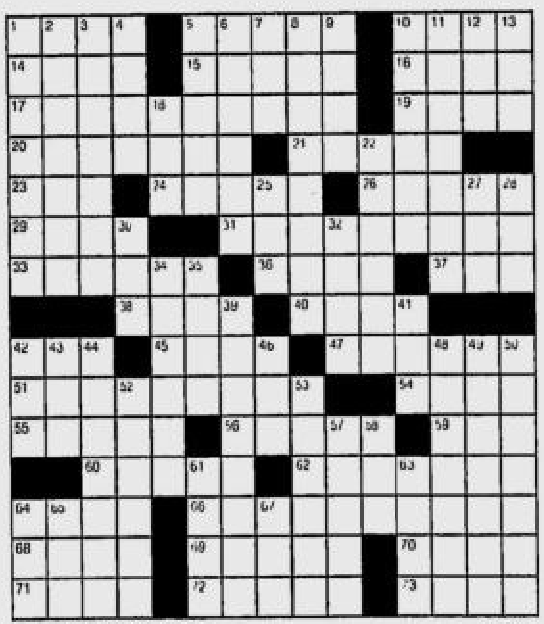
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Tread carefully at home, and try to be patient with family members. Arguments can erupt easily, simply because people feel intensely about everything today. Furthermore, a sense of competition confuses the issue.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You can sell, sway, influence, teach and persuade others to agree with you today. You have the gift of gab. You must have kissed the Blarney Stone recently!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Do not be too hasty to spend your money today. You are definitely susceptible to emotional spending, which is not always a wise thing.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You can definitely take the initiative today in something that could appear to be difficult. However, do not mistake foolhardiness for bravery.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

7/17/03

ACROSS
1 Lucy's love
5 Golf course
10 Hockey score
14 Algerian port
15 Puerile
16 Ancient alphabet character
17 Start of Meryl Streep quote
19 Sicilian volcano
20 Tester
21 Back-and-forth curves
23 Actress Peeples
24 "__ Arden"
26 Charged particle
29 Egg drinks
31 Part 2 of quote
33 "Oedipus" composer
36 Large quantity
37 Building addition
38 Fifth Avenue landmark
40 Seth's son
42 Chicago transp.
45 Rodent pests
47 Brookner and Loos
51 Part 3 of quote
54 Felon, to a cop
55 Drive out
56 Wrench
59 Latin I lesson word
60 Spaghetti, e.g.
62 Dampen
64 Smell
66 End of quote
68 Poet Crane
69 Pay hike
70 Rene's friend
71 Legendary tale
72 "Saint Maybe" novelist
73 Bosc or anjou

DOWN
1 Elder from the distaff side
2 Wearing away
3 Frankfurter's cousin
4 Machu Picchu resident
5 Type of closet
6 Lead-ins
7 Old horse
8 Desk opening
9 Match parts
10 Author of "Our Man in Havana"
11 Exterior
12 New England cape
13 Meadow
18 Nautical affirmative
22 California's __ Sea
25 Bean-counter's letters
27 Lubricate
28 Org. of Giants
30 Former draft org.
32 New Rochelle school
34 Yuletide songs
35 Approve
39 Free passage seeker
41 Nurse a drink
42 Check out
43 Bagel topper
44 Hold up
46 Big __, CA
48 When scones are served
49 Former USSR part
50 Moocher
52 Shortage
53 Release a claim to
57 More painful
58 Yucatan uncle
61 Legal wrong
63 Lose one's cool
64 Resistance unit
65 Calendar unit
67 Score of zero

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

R	A	S	P	Y	■	B	A	A	L	■	C	R	A	B
A	L	O	H	A	■	A	T	R	A	■	R	A	T	E
M	A	D	A	M	■	S	I	G	H	■	I	D	O	L
P	S	A	L	M	■	S	P	O	O	N	B	I	L	L
■	■	■	A	E	R	O	■	■	R	O	S	I	L	Y
S	I	E	R	R	A	■	C	E	E	S	■	■	■	■
A	N	N	O	■	S	H	A	D	■	E	A	G	E	R
S	T	O	P	■	H	A	B	I	T	■	L	U	A	U
H	O	L	E	D	■	L	I	E	U	■	B	A	S	E
■	■	■	■	I	R	O	N	■	F	O	A	M	E	D
O	N	E	I	D	A	■	■	S	A	L	T	■	■	■
C	O	R	M	O	R	A	N	T	■	D	R	O	O	P
H	O	O	P	■	E	R	I	E	■	H	O	R	D	E
E	S	S	E	■	F	E	T	E	■	A	S	C	O	T
R	E	E	L	■	Y	S	E	R	■	T	S	A	R	S

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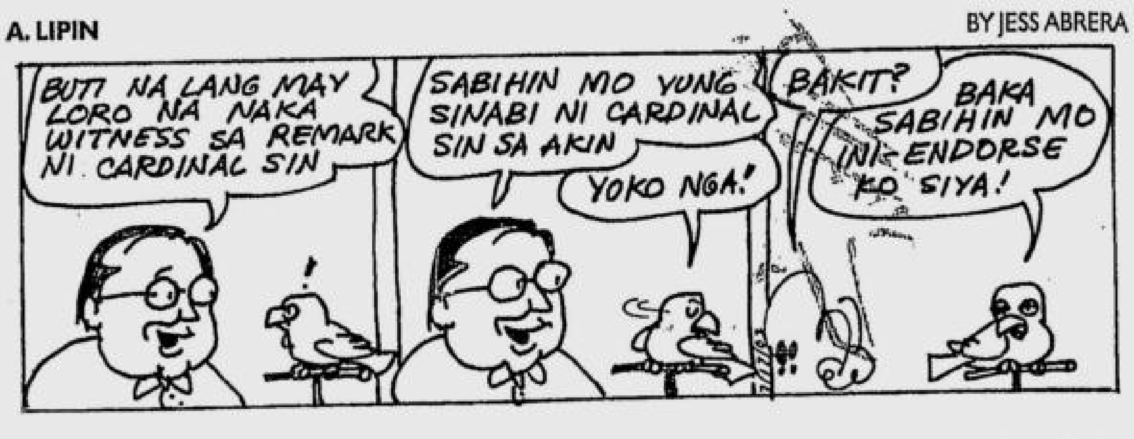
7/17/03

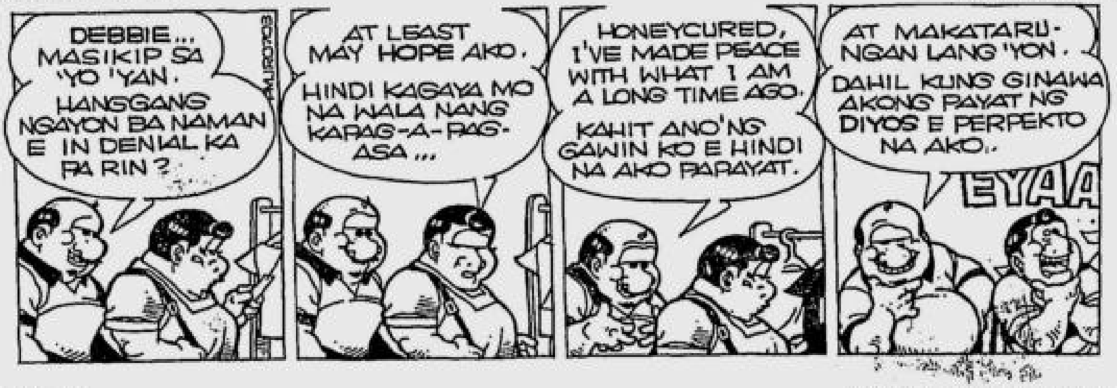
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BUTI NA LANG MAY LORO NA NAKA WITNESS SA REMARK NI CARDINAL SIN
SABIHIN MO YUNG SINABI NI CARDINAL SIN SA AKIN
YOKO NGA!
BAKIT?
BAKA SABIHIN MO INI-ENDORSE KO SIYA!

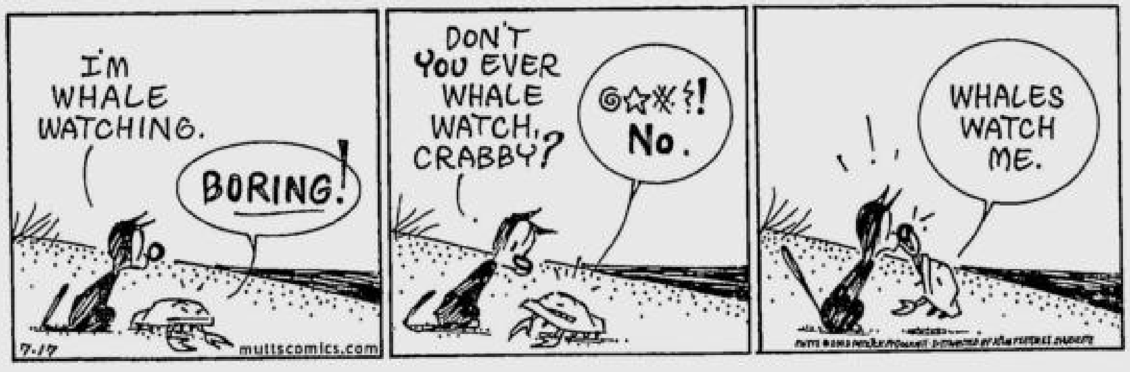
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


DEBBIE... MASIKIP SA 'YO 'YAN. HANGGANG NGAYON BA NAMAN E IN DENIAL KA PA RIN?
AT LEAST MAY HOPE AKO.
HINDI KAGAYA MO NA WALA NANG KAPAG-A-PAG-ASA...
HONEYCURED, I'VE MADE PEACE WITH WHAT I AM A LONG TIME AGO.
KAHIT ANO'NG GAWIN KO E HINDI NA AKO PAPAYAT.
AT MAKATARUNGAN LANG 'YON.
DAHIL KUNG GINAWA AKONG PAYAT NG DIYOS E PERPEKTO NA AKO..
EYAA

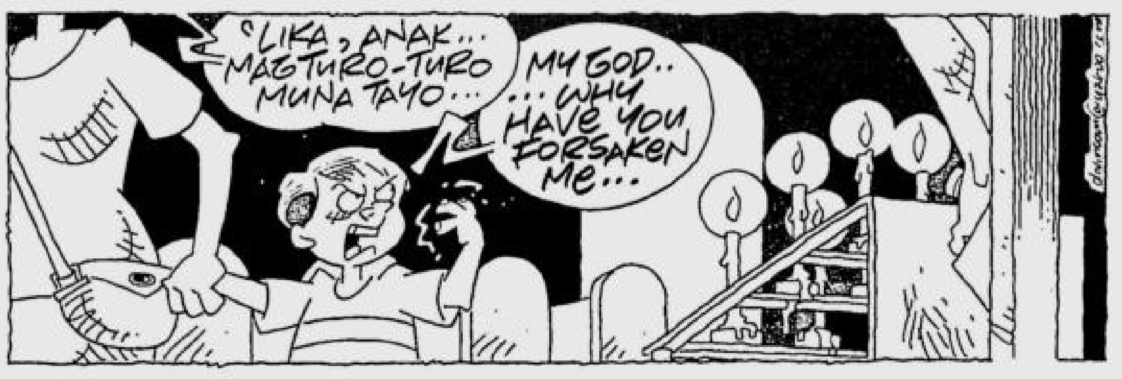
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M WHALE WATCHING.
BORING!
DON'T YOU EVER WHALE WATCH, CRABBY?
@☆✻?! No.
WHALES WATCH ME.
7-17
muttscomics.com

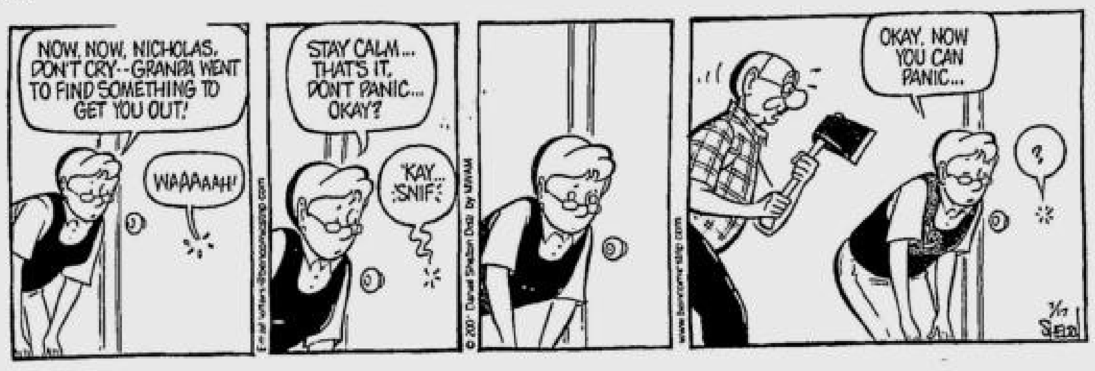
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


'LIKA, ANAK... MAGTURO-TURO MUNA TAYO...
MY GOD.. ...WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME...

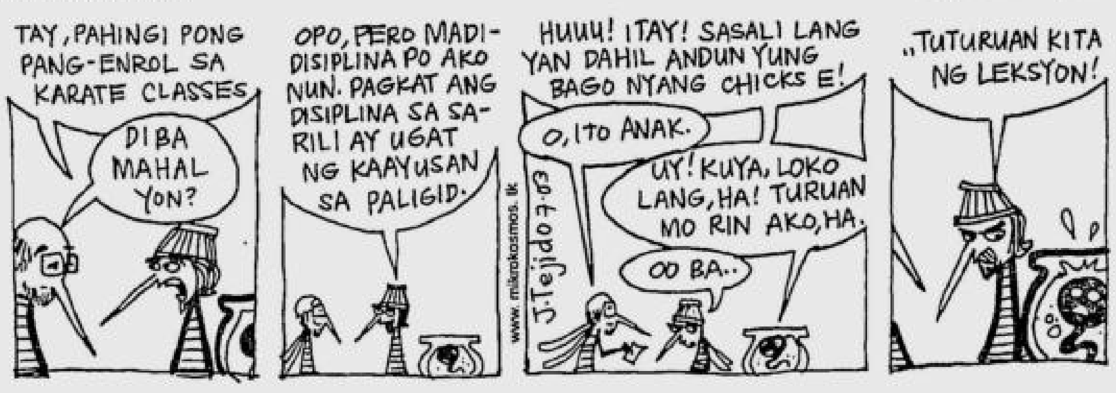
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NOW, NOW, NICHOLAS. DON'T CRY--GRANPA WENT TO FIND SOMETHING TO GET YOU OUT!
WAAAAAH!
STAY CALM... THAT'S IT, DON'T PANIC... OKAY?
'KAY... SNIF
OKAY. NOW YOU CAN PANIC...
?

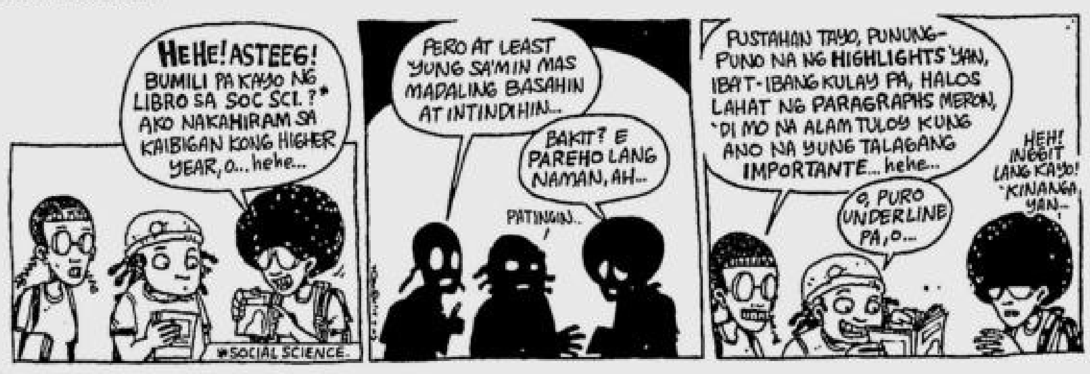
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


TAY, PAHINGI PONG PANG-ENROL SA KARATE CLASSES
DI BA MAHAL YON?
OPO, PERO MADI-DISIPLINA PO AKO NUN. PAGKAT ANG DISIPLINA SA SARILI AY UGAT NG KAAYUSAN SA PALIGID.
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J.Tejido 7.03
HUUU! ITAY! SASALI LANG YAN DAHIL ANDUN YUNG BAGO NYANG CHICKS E!
O, ITO ANAK.
UY! KUYA, LOKO LANG, HA! TURUAN MO RIN AKO, HA.
OO BA..
..TUTURUAN KITA NG LEKSYON!

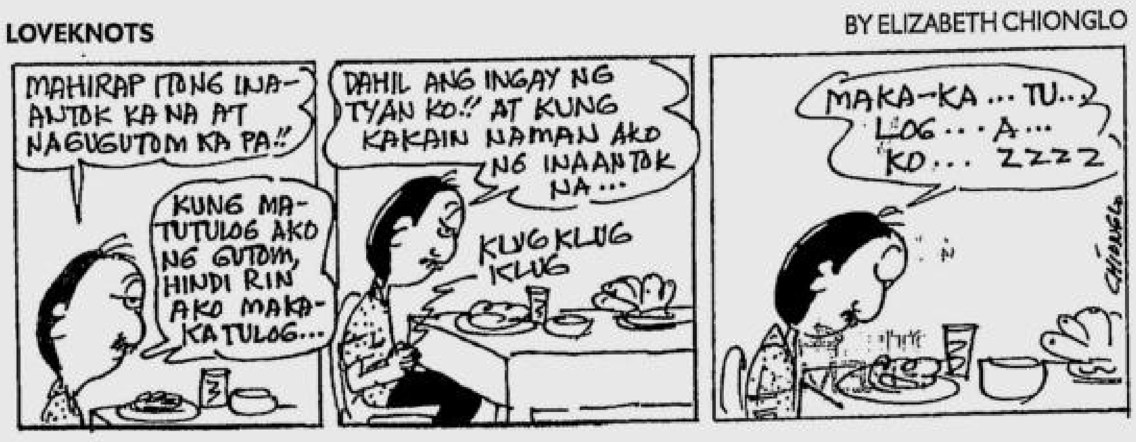
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HEHE! ASTEEG! BUMILI PA KAYO NG LIBRO SA SOC SCI.?* AKO NAKAHIRAM SA KAIBIGAN KONG HIGHER YEAR, O... hehe...
*SOCIAL SCIENCE.
PERO AT LEAST YUNG SA'MIN MAS MADALING BASAHIN AT INTINDIHIN...
BAKIT? E PAREHO LANG NAMAN, AH...
PATINGIN..
PUSTAHAN TAYO, PUNUNG-PUNO NA NG HIGHLIGHTS 'YAN, IBA'T-IBANG KULAY PA, HALOS LAHAT NG PARAGRAPHS MERON, 'DI MO NA ALAM TULOY KUNG ANO NA YUNG TALAGANG IMPORTANTE... hehe...
O, PURO UNDERLINE PA, O...
HEH! INGGIT LANG KAYO! KINANGA YAN...

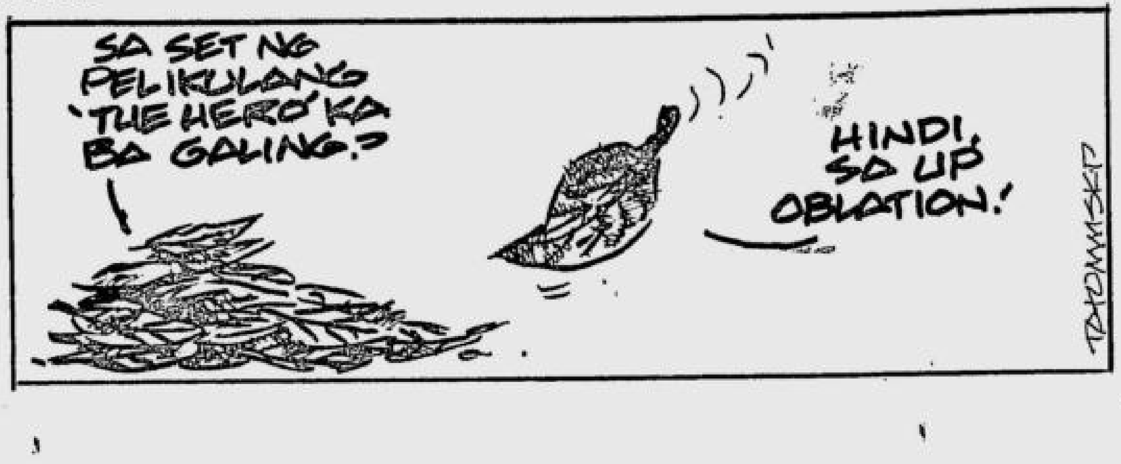
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MAHIRAP ITONG INAANTOK KA NA AT NAGUGUTOM KA PA!!
KUNG MATUTULOG AKO NG GUTOM, HINDI RIN AKO MAKAKATULOG...
DAHIL ANG INGAY NG TYAN KO!! AT KUNG KAKAIN NAMAN AKO NG INAANTOK NA...
KLUG KLUG KLUG
MAKA-KA... TU... LOG... A... KO... ZZZZ
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SA SET NG PELIKULANG 'THE HERO' KA BA GALING?
HINDI, SA UP OBLATION!

Tours, Leisure & Chow

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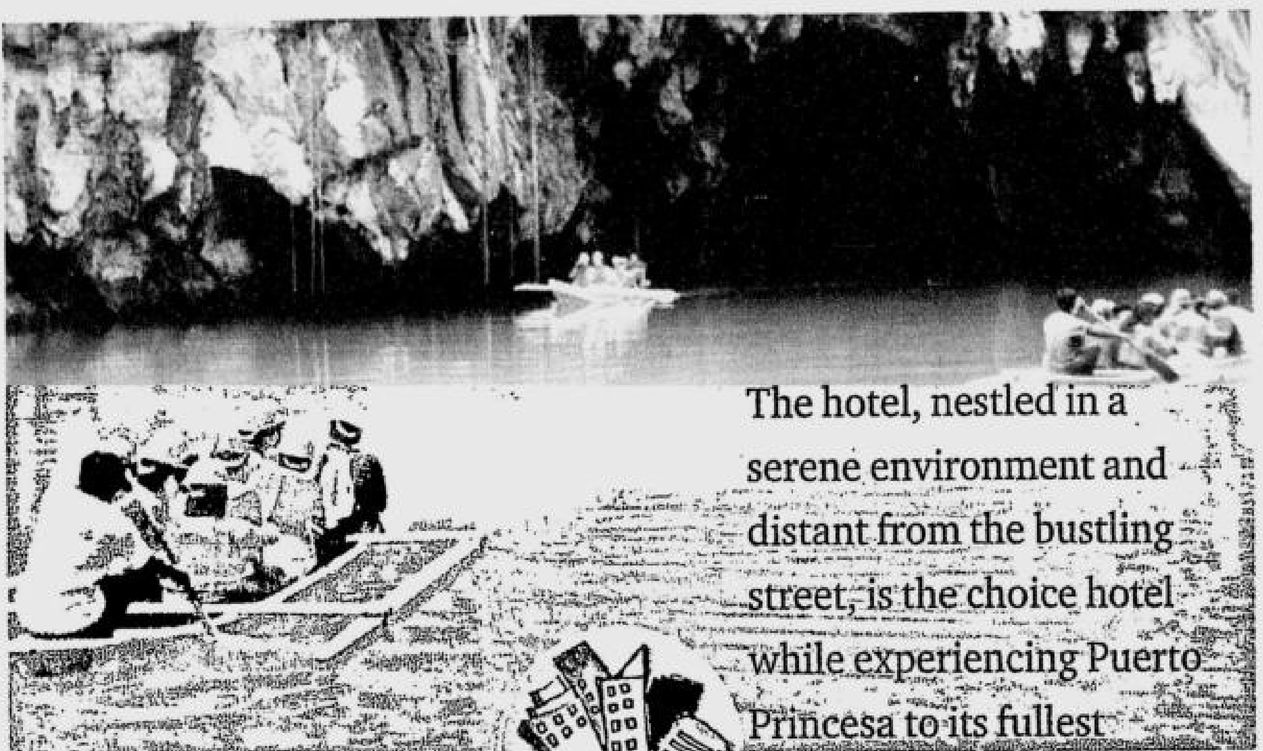
Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design
Aries Espinosa, Editor

Barcelo Asturias Hotel's Palawan 'escapade'



The hotel, nestled in a serene environment and distant from the bustling street, is the choice hotel while experiencing Puerto Princesa to its fullest

PALAWAN, known to the world as the Philippines' last ecological frontier, is considered by many as one of the most enchanting places to explore. Its wealth of wonders, warm people and enigmatic charm leave a lasting impression to most people who visit this place. Visitors will surely go home captivated by its natural beauty, exotic terrain and endless adventure offerings as relived by Barceló Asturias Hotel's "Puerto Princesa Escapades!"

Priced at only P4,500 net per person, this special offer entitles adventure lovers with a three-day and two-night accommodation in the hotel, round-trip airport transfers, full board meals and a city tour. Guests are given a choice to pick an adventure tour of either exploring the Underground River or a Honda Bay Island Hopping tour. After the tiring escapade, guests are given the privilege to use the hotel's swimming pool and relax the senses in the Jacuzzi. The "Puerto Princesa Escapades!" special package was created in line with the hotel's thrust in promoting eco-tourism and commitment in providing "only the very best" to guests.

The hotel, nestled in a serene environment and distant from the bustling street, is the choice hotel while experiencing Puerto Princesa to its fullest. Styled like a Mediterranean villa and inviting in its subtle elegance, the Barcelo Asturias Hotel's character is a much welcome relief from the flashy atmosphere of today's hotels. Sixty tastefully furnished rooms line two floors and are positioned to view a recreational area that features a swimming pool and Jacuzzi amidst a tropical garden. It is amongst the properties managed and operated by the international chain of Barceló Hotels and Resorts.

Barceló Asturias Hotel invites you to explore Puerto Princesa and rediscover your zest for adventure. For inquiries on the "Puerto Princesa Escapades!" special offer, call its Manila sales office at 894-4656 and 867-1159. You must visit its website at www.barcelo-asia.com.

Where to S
Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

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www.marriott.com

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Tel. 813-8888/ Fax 813-5499
www.shangri-la.com

Dusit Hotel Nikko
Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil.
Tel. 867-3333 Email: dusitmnl@dusit.com
http://manila.dusit.com

Barcelo Hotels and Resorts
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Salcedo Village, Makati
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www.intercontinental.com

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Tel. 750-8888
www.mandarin-oriental.com

The Bellevue Manila
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Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/ fax (632) 771-8282
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Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
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Fax. (074) 447-0494

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Sari-saring Sinigang at the Café

WHAT dishes may be classified as very Pinoy? There are only a few of them really: Sinigang, Adobo, Lechon, Nilaga, etc. But it is a marvel that the interpretation of each make up a varied list, differing from one region to another. Interesting as they are, The Café of Dusit Hotel Nikko will feature in the coming months a series of essential Filipino dishes.

They are perennially present in the Filipino's dining able, but varies, however, depending on what part of the country you're in.

First in focus from July 19 to 31 is the ever-popular Sinigang.

Sinigang is basically a soup that mixes the sour and salty and a bit of the hot all at once. Its main ingredients vary with fish, shrimp, pork, chicken or beef. It is best taken with piping hot rice along with the vegetables that go with it like tomatoes, *kangkong*, *okra*, radish, string beans and eggplant. Typically adding spice to it is a pepper natives call *siling lara*.

At the Café's Sari-saring Sinigang, one may choose from among the selection of broths like the *miso*, *kamias*, green mango, tamarind, *santol*, guava, or perhaps the exotic *alibangbang* leaves. To further please the diners it offers the Catch of the Day such as *talakitok*, *samaral*, *kitang*, *tilapia*, *kanduli*, blue marlin, *tanigue* or *lapu-lapu* depending on the availability of these fish varieties. Saring-saring Sinigang will be offered ala carte for lunch and dinner. For queries call 867-3333 extention 3346.

LADIES' TIME OUT AT THIEN DUONG

Until July 31, Thien Duong Restaurant of Dusit Hotel Nikko will have its tables laden with a selection of healthy and nutritious dishes for all ladies with its Ladies Time Out promo. All ladies dining will automatically receive a voucher that entitles them to a discount at James Cooper Salon-Dusit Hotel Nikko branch. Plus, they will also be able to bring home any of the following: discount cards from Manel's quality shoes and bags, gift packs from Campbell's or Magnolia dairy Crème Lite. For queries, call 867-3333 extension 3354.

Winemaker's Dinner and more at The Tivoli

THE TIVOLI at the Mandarin Oriental has fast become a premier gathering place for gourmands and wine connoisseurs. This July, The Tivoli will host another winemaker's dinner on the 18th, and another episode of "Nights of Wines and Fine Dining" on the 25th.

Featured winemaker tomorrow is Wayne Dutschke of South Australia, who brings with him three superb red wines from Barossa Valley, all 2001 vintage—Willow Bend-Cavernet Sauvignon-Shiraz, St Jacobi Shiraz, and Oscar Semmler Shiraz . A four-course dinner menu is offered with the sampling of Dutschke Shiraz, at P2,500++.

On July 25, Friday, the monthly epicurean feast held every second and last Friday of the month offers a delectable eight-course meal paired with bottomless glasses of fine wines from various regions, at P1,900++ per person. A 10-percent discount to Privilege cardholders is extended.

The menu and wine list includes: Salad of poached lobster, pan-fried goose-liver, seared peppered scallops with *shitake* mushroom and *pedit* salad greens tossed in citrus chervil dressing, paired with Pinot Grigio delle Venezie, Bolla, Italy, 1999; String potato crusted pan-fried halibut fillet on fennel tomato beurre blanc paired with Bin 22 Chardonnay, Wyndham Estate, Australia 20; and . Ballontine of French pigeon with balsamic glazed eggplant, wilted spinach and morel sauce paired with Le Poiane Jago, Valpolicella-Classico, Italy 1995, to mention three of the exquisite food and wine tandems.

David Thomas, food and beverage director, says that the wine and food events at The Tivoli has gained a consistent following, which has prompted The Tivoli to offer a rewards card called "Fans of Wines and Fine Dining" for wine lovers. For reservations to Tivoli's exquisite dinners, call 750-8888 extension 2433.

Islands Souvenirs colors the skies

IF FLYING has never been on top of your favorite "to-do" things, better think again. Islands Souvenirs teams up with Cebu Pacific to add color to the island hopping experience and bring more fun to flying.

The Cebu-based retail giant adds color to all Cebu Pacific flights, ticket offices and airport terminals as it dresses up the airline's in-flight and ground crew with its specially designed casual gear with unique colorful destination prints.

Discount coupons are also attached to all Cebu Pacific boarding passes to give passengers a 10-percent discount at Islands Souvenirs outlets.

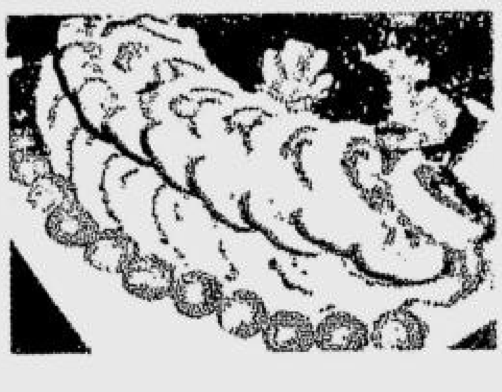
A welcome addition to its Fun Flights, Cebu Pacific general manager Danilo Mojica was quoted, "Islands Souvenirs is the perfect partner because our respective brands complement each other and this is the first time a co-branding effort between two Visayan consumer giants has been established."

"We are excited about this nationwide promotion because our network of retail outlets and their flight route network will bring that stress-free, fun travel experience to our customers," says Islands Souvenirs VP for marketing Lyndon Angan.

Islands Souvenirs apparel and accessories are available at leading malls and department stores nationwide.

TASTEFUL SURPRISES AT CAFÉ UNO

Café Uno Buffet Lunch features a variety of tasteful surprises for the month of July at a comfortable price of P400 net per person with one round of Iced Tea. International Buffet (Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays), Japanese Buffet (Mondays), Italian Buffet (Wednesdays), Korean Buffet (Fridays) and Filipino Buffet with Lechon (Saturdays). Indulge and try all these exciting offerings at Waterfront Insular Hotel Davao.



ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS

PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 DOWN WITH LOVE	1 LIZZIE MCGUIRE	ArtFilm 1 MIRANDA (Exclusive) 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 DOWN WITH LOVE 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30	THX 1 DOWN WITH LOVE
2 TERMINATOR 3	2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE	2 TERMINATOR 3 11:40, 2:05, 4:30, 6:55, 9:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 TERMINATOR 3 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	2 LIZZIE MCGUIRE
3 DEATHWATCH	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 TERMINATOR 3 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	Onstage	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30	3 TERMINATOR 3
4 MASAMANG UGAT	4 JACKASS		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 IMPOSTOR 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	4 JACKASS
	5 THE BANGKOK HAUNTED		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 LIZZIE MCGUIRE 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30	5 IMPOSTOR
	6 DOWN WITH LOVE			
	7 IMPOSTOR			

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Reserve your seats by texting **SURESEATS GB3** or **SURESEATS G4** and send to **2333**. Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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1 (DOLBY) CHARLIE'S ANGELS
2 (SDDS) TERMINATOR-3
3 (DTS) JACKASS THE MOVIE
4 GOLD (DTS ES) DOWN WITH LOVE
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX) LIZZIE MCGUIRE
6 GOLD (SDDS) TERMINATOR-3
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX) IMPOSTOR
8 MASAMANG UGAT
9 DEATH WATCH
10 BANGKOK HAUNTED

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5
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2 BANGKOK HAUNTED
3 -
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Cyborg with a conscience

From page A26

In addition, he's given impulses that go beyond his electrical circuitry: Having interacted with humans for such a long time, he's acquired some of their ways, thought processes, loyalties, and—can we say the dreaded F word?—feelings.

Yes, there comes a time when T is given an order so cruel that he questions it, a big no-no for a cyborg like him.

As a result of the conflict within him, his circuitry goes berserk, until he resolves the issue in his human friends' favor, and refuses to follow the vicious order because, in the light of his mission to protect Connor at all costs, he deems it an Invalid Command.

Portrait of a cyborg with a conscience!

Unlikely? Well, of course, like most of the things that happen in this film. But logic isn't the film's point. The production is more interested in setting the stage for chases, explosions, confrontations between men and machines, and cyborg vs cyborg—so that's what we get, in heaps.

In the midst of the high-tech fight to the finish, two elements stand out: the long car chase in which T-X drives a monster of a truck with a crane, and sequences in which T-X beats T so badly that he ends up like a rag doll with its neck broken.

These sequences echo the girls-beating-up-guys scenes in the latest "Charlie's Angels" movie, adding up to an incipient "woman power" trend that should strike fear in the hearts of movie machos everywhere.

So, what's the final lowdown on "T3"?

See it for its hyperkinetic visuals, effects, chases, and occasional vulnerable moments, and don't expect the production to give you much more than that.

Right, Gov. Schwarzenegger?

'Ugat'

WILLIE Milan's "Masamang Ugat" is Viva Film's big action project for 2003.

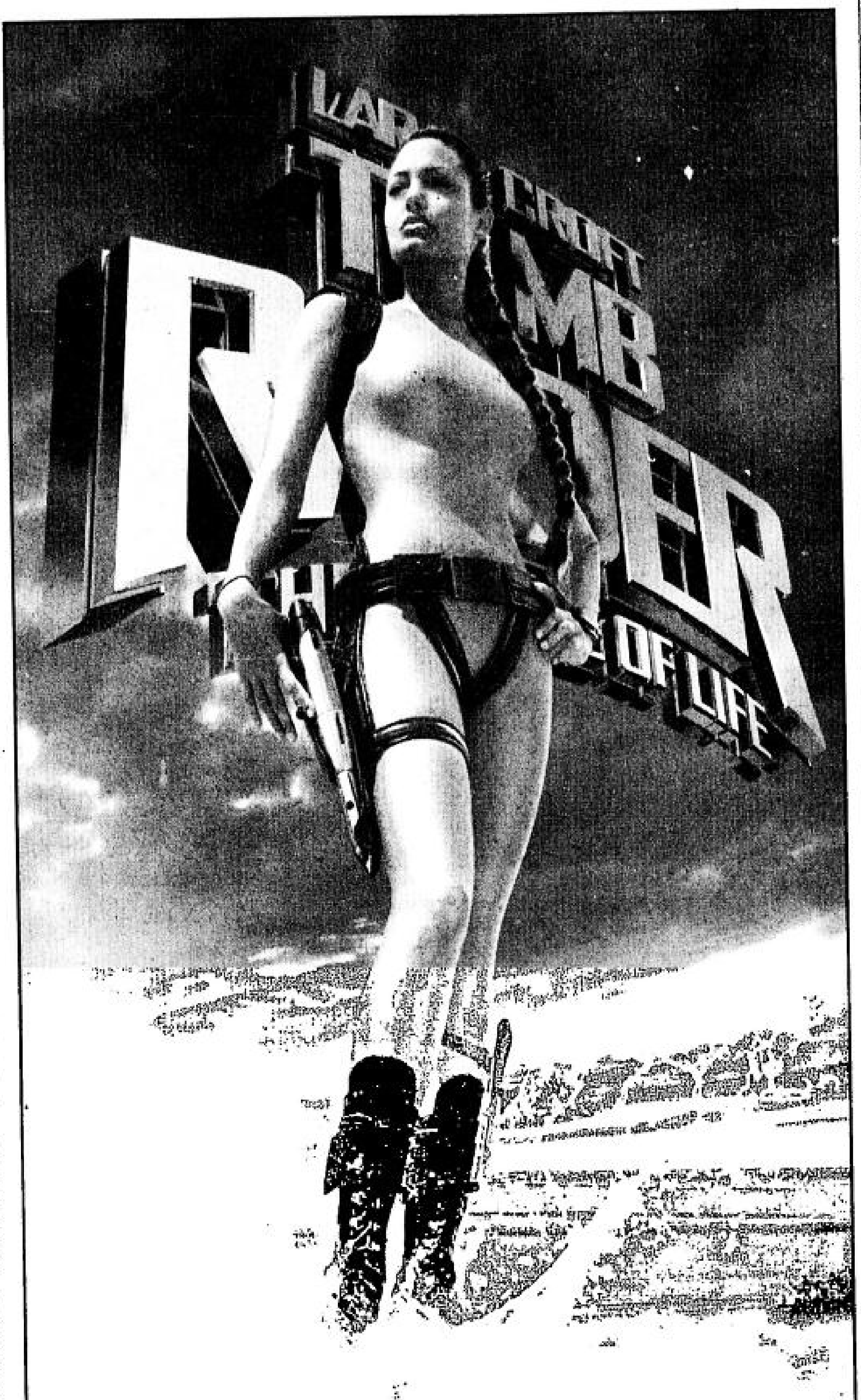
It topbills **Eddie Garcia, Mikey Arroyo, Maui Taylor, Ace Vergel** and **Victor Neri.**

It tells the story of David and Angelo, two brothers who get separated, and their involvement with a drug syndicate. David (Ace Vergel) becomes a hit man, while Angelo (Mikey Arroyo) gets assigned to the Narcom unit that's assigned to investigate a farm that hides a big shabu factory.

The drug gang's boss, Apo Roman (Eddie Garcia), turns out to be the long-lost father of both David and Angelo. He has another son named Darwin (Neri) who is as ruthless as his father's henchmen.

David wants to get even with Apo Roman and Darwin, while Angelo is bent on bringing them to justice.

Trouble is, how can Apo Roman and his sons reunite in this highly charged and conflicted scenario?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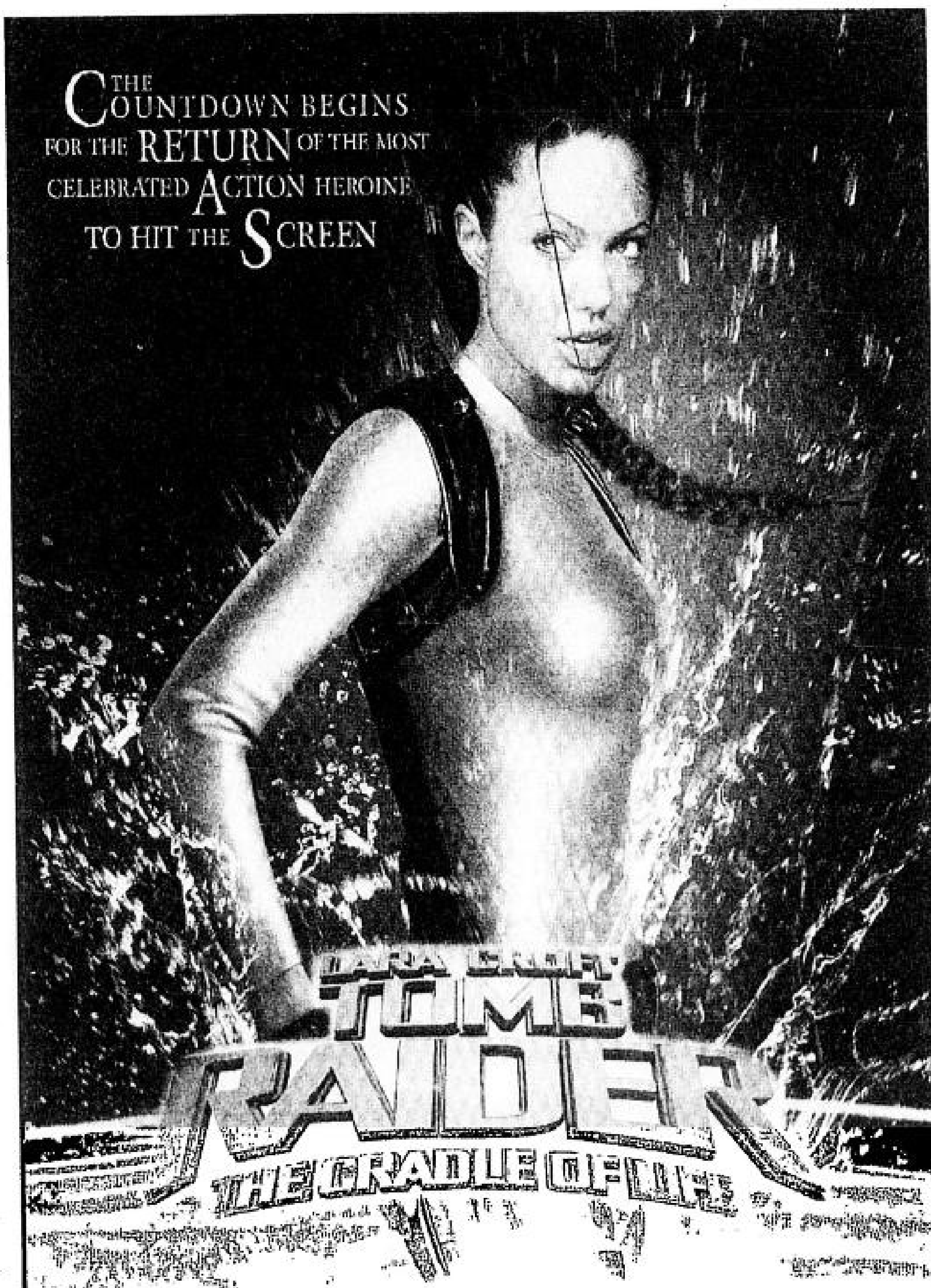
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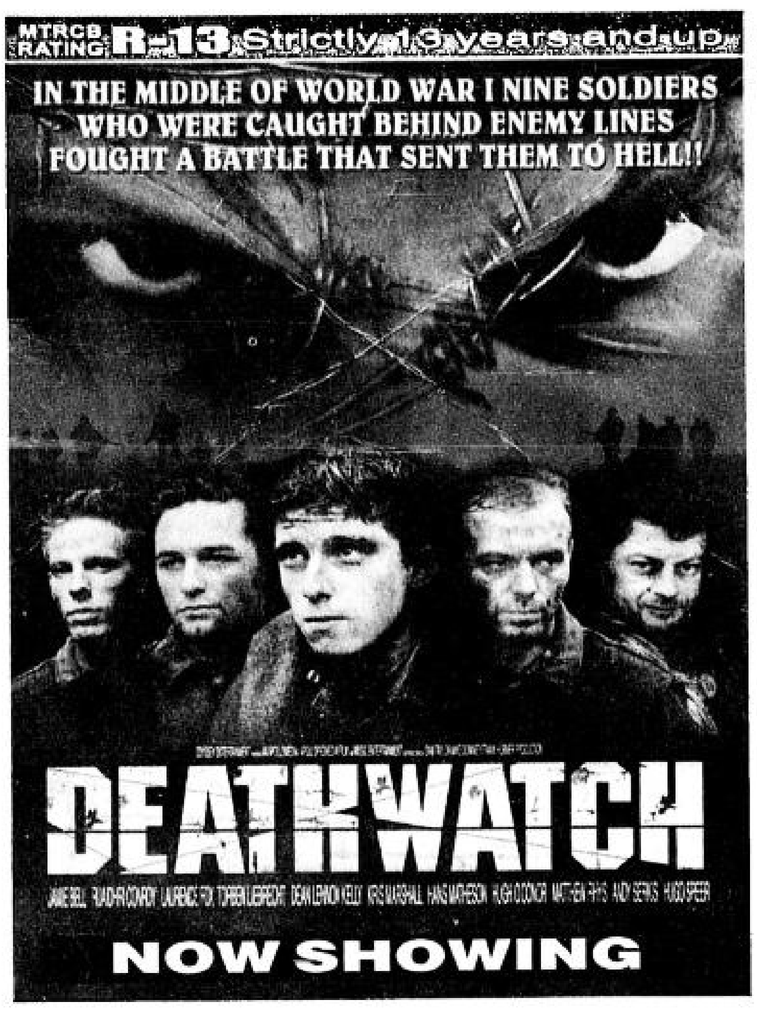
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NOW SHOWING

Cyborg with a conscience

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NO, **Arnold Schwarzenegger** isn't a cyborg, he just plays one again in the third and possibly final installment of the profitable "Terminator" film franchise.

How does he go from playing a machine to achieving his immediate dream of becoming the governor of California? (Ultimately, going the tried and tested **Ronald Reagan** route, he could even be programming himself to become the future president of the USA!)

Well, it's all part of the package: If "Terminator 3" becomes a hit (it has), it'll make up for some of Arnold's recent flops, make him popular and bankable all over again, and provide a strong reminder of super-capability to California viewers next election year.

But, a cyborg as governor of the Sunshine State? Well, stranger things have been known to happen. For instance, take the loopy events that take place in "T3": "T2's" John Connor is now a young man, and T-X, a cyborg more powerful than the Terminator, has been sent to kill him.

This will set the stage for the ultimate Judgment Day, or the "Rise of the Machines" that is "T3's second title.

Connor gets involved with a young woman who turns out to be the daughter of the commander who's on top of the USA's big, top-secret military defense system, so all the three of them must bear the brunt of T-X's high-tech rage.

Ironically, T-X is packaged in the disarming form of a 6-foot-tall, Supermodel-type woman (**Kristanna Loken**), so the fight scenes involving her don't rely merely on brute strength, but also on cleverness and sweet duplicity.

Unfortunately, the movie's special effects are so spectacular that Loken doesn't come into her own as a screen find. She comes off as wooden and dull, and completely subservient to the production's prodigious SFX quotient.

What a waste of star potential...

Schwarzenegger doesn't waste the opportunity that "T3" provides him to show another, more vulnerable side to his aging cyborg character. Almost always outfought by the more advanced and deadly T-X, his T character ends up a battered mess in this production. In some scenes, he looks so beaten up and shot full of holes that he appears to be ready for the junk heap!

CYBORG/ A25

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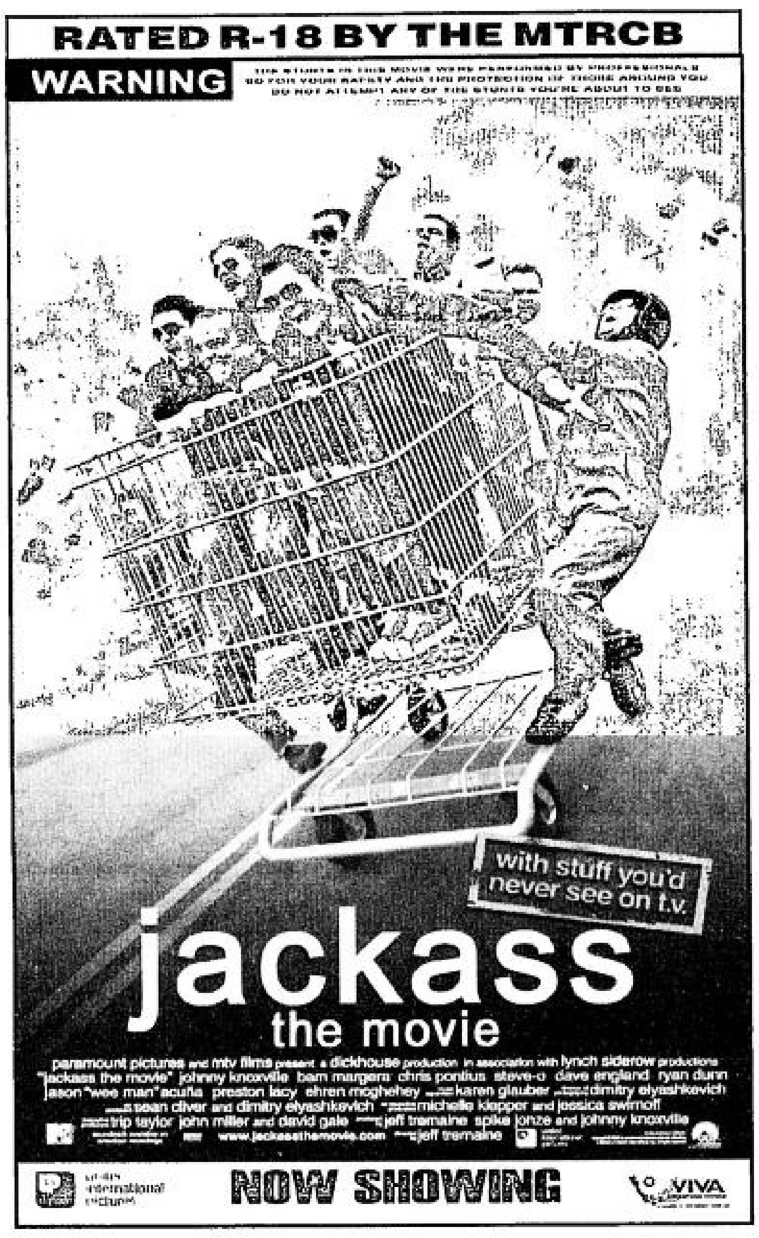
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Ali 3	TERMINATOR 3
Ali 4	BANGKOK HAUNTED
Ali 5	LIZZIE MCGUIRE
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JACKASS R18 1:40,3:40,5:40, 7:40,9:40	LIZZIE MCGUIRE GP 11:40,1:50,4:00, 6:10,8:20,10:30	DOWN WITH LOVE PG13 1:30,3:40,5:50, 8:00,10:10
IMPOSTOR PG13 11:40,1:40,3:45, 5:50,7:55,10:00	BANGKOK HAUNTED R13 1:20,4:00, 6:40,9:30	TERMINATOR: RISE OF THE MACHINES PG13 12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00

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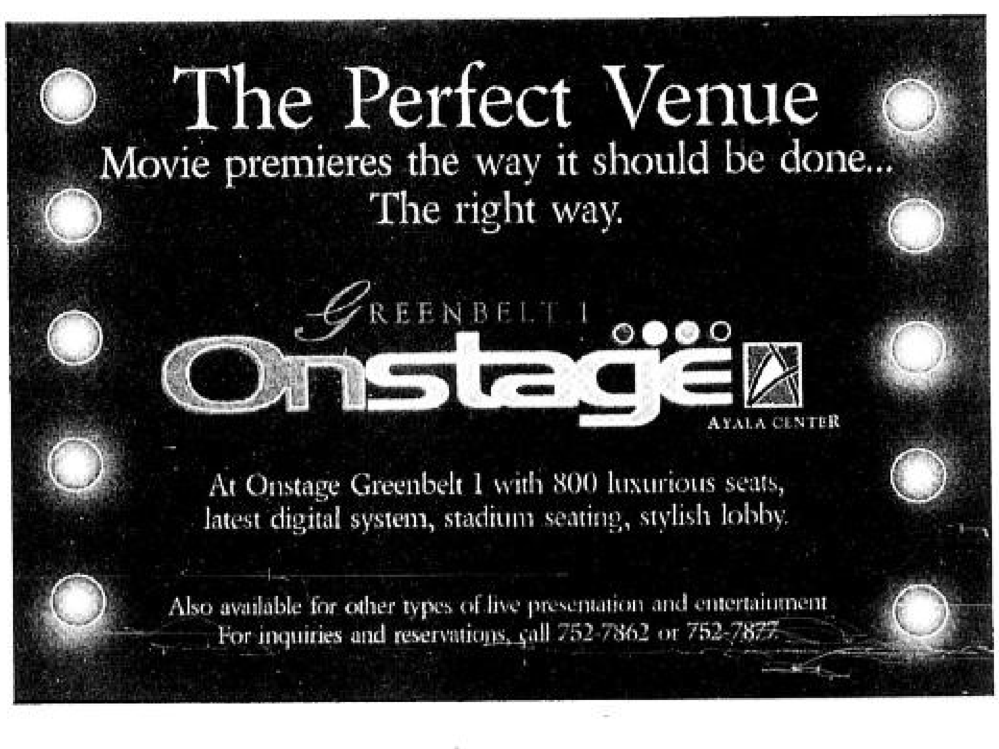
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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	UNFAITHFUL CUNCUBINE/KAMA 2
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	TERMINATOR 3
B	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DUMB & DUMBERER
CINEMA-2	HUNTED
CINEMA-3	BIGLANG LIKO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TERMINATTOR 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	CHARLIES ANGELS 2
CINEMA-6	TUKAAN
CINEMA-7	HOT SPOT
CINEMA-8	MASAMANG UGAT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DOWN WITH LOVE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TERMINATTOR 3
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	LIZZIE MCGUIRE
CINEMA-12	JACKASS
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CINEMA-15	BANGKOK HANUTED
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CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
CINEMA 2	DARKNESS FALLS
CINEMA 3	A MAN APART
CINEMA 4	28 DAYS LATER
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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Meralco, Napocor sign ₱20-B settlement

By Ronnel W. Domingo

UTILITY giant Manila Electric Co. and the cash-strapped National Power Corp. signed on Tuesday a detailed agreement on a P20-billion settlement on unmet electricity sales quotas, which Meralco officials said would translate to savings of about 10 centavos per kilowatt-hour for its customers.

Meralco director Christian Monsod said the utility would pay the amount over five years, which would be reflected in customers' monthly bills as additional generation cost of between 13 centavos and 14 centavos.

However, the agreement also provides that Meralco's independent power suppliers would be allowed to run at their minimum contracted levels.

"That, in turn, would mean rate reductions of between 23 centavos and 25 centavos per kWh based on March 2003 rates because the cost of electricity bought from our independent suppliers would go down if they run at contract levels," Monsod explained.

Meralco's contracts with Quezon Power Philippines and First Gas Power Corp. provide that the producers' plants should run at 86 percent and 83 percent of their installed capacity, respectively.

Quezon Power runs the 470-megawatt coal plant in Mauban town while First Gas owns two natural-gas fired plants with a combined capacity of 1,500 MW.

Meralco records showed that the power plants are currently running at between 61 percent and 70 percent of their installed capacities.

Monsod said that without the provision for Meralco's IPPs, there would only be the penalty payment which end-users would shoulder.

"Through the mediation process that we underwent, we (Meralco and Napocor) arrived at a resolution that benefits consumers," the official said.

"The net effect is savings for customes at about 10 centavos per kWh."

He added that the settlement's effects on power rates still needed the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission.

"We expect to jointly file an application with the ERC next week," Monsod said.

The settlement stemmed from Meralco's failure to buy an agreed monthly volume of electricity from Napocor.

Under a 10-year contract with Napocor that was to last until 2004, Meralco was supposed to buy 3,600 MW a month from Napocor.

But the utility failed to comply with this minimum offtake provision since its IPPs started commercial operations in 2001.

For that, Napocor slapped Meralco P28 billion in penalties. However, Meralco lodged a claim of about P8 billion for delays in Napocor's transmission services.

The two firms agreed to work on a settlement in May.

INDICATORS

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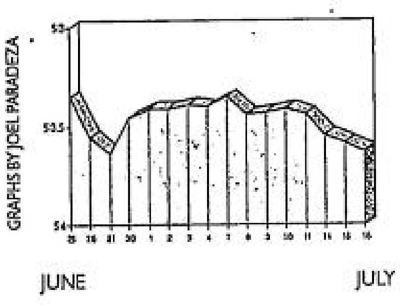


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.63 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 16, 2003

¥118.32 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 16, 2003

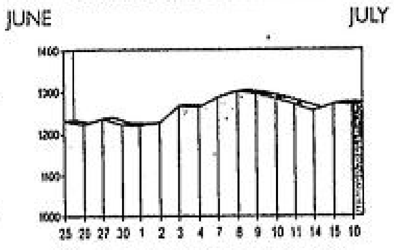
GOLD: $342.00-342.50
per ounce Hong Kong, July 16, 2003

July 16, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.895255	1.000000	53.599000
Japan	Yen	0.007596	0.008485	0.454800
United Kingdom	Pound	1.424978	1.591700	85.313500
Hongkong	Dollar	0.114788	0.128218	6.872400
Switzerland	Franc	0.645881	0.721449	38.668900
Canada	Dollar	0.643421	0.718701	38.521700
Singapore	Dollar	0.509449	0.569055	30.500800
Australia	Dollar	0.585402	0.653894	35.048100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.374745	2.652590	142.176200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.238735	0.266667	14.293100
Brunei	Dollar	0.508004	0.567440	30.414200
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000122	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.021598	0.024125	1.293100
UAE	Dirham	0.243753	0.272272	14.593500
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.117000	59.870100
ArgentinaPeso	0.321456	0.359066	19.245600	
Brazil	REAL	0.314014	0.350754	18.800100
Denmark	Kroner	0.134538	0.150279	8.054800
India	Rupee	0.019449	0.021725	1.164400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.235625	0.263193	14.106900
Mexico	New Peso	0.085605	0.095621	5.125200
New Zealand	Dollar	0.522289	0.583397	31.269500
Norway	Kroner	0.119805	0.133822	7.172700
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015529	0.017346	0.929700
South Africa	Rand	0.117718	0.131491	7.047800
Korea	Won	0.000761	0.000850	0.045600
Sweden	Kroner	0.109408	0.122209	6.550300
Syria	Pound	0.021316	0.023810	1.276200
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026139	0.029197	1.564900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000561	0.000627	0.033600

STOCK MARKET

Stocks dip on profit-taking

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS closed slightly lower yesterday on profit-taking in select blue chips led by property leader Ayala Land.

Analysts said news that telecom leader PLDT's first-half net income was chopped due to massive provisioning also disappointed players.

PLDT announced at the start of the trading session its first half net income stood at P1.78 billion after provisions of P4.8 billion were booked to cover the cost of staff cuts and some assets.

In the first half of 2002, PLDT posted earnings after provisions of P2.71 billion.

"Investors chose to focus on the company's large provisions which dragged down first-semester profits," said BPI Securities investment analyst Spencer Yap.

The Philippine main index closed 2.06 points or 0.16 percent lower at 1,270.33 points.

Share price of PLDT, after touching a low of P545 in mid-session, closed unchanged at P555.

Value turnover reached P849.57 million from Tuesday's P473.81 million.

In the broader market, advancers beat losers 28 to 25 and there were 46 stocks unchanged.

Analysts said PLDT's disappointing first-half performance might make investors more cautious while awaiting the release of other corporate earnings for the first six months of 2003.

"PLDT's weak first-half performance may set the stage for the market's resumption of consolidation," Yap said.

"We may see investors taking a more cautious stance with regards to pricing other major index issues," he said, pegging the market's next support level at 1,240.

Ayala Land, the country's largest property firm, closed 30 centavos lower at P6.10.

Reuters

SMC beer sales seen up in June

FOOD and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. likely posted a 10-percent expansion in revenue from beer sales for the month of June to P2.1 billion from a year ago, allowing the division's first half earnings to hit the P15-billion mark.

A source privy to SMC's operations disclosed yesterday that based on trade data from dealers, beer sales continued to be brisk for the month of June following the company's aggressive sales and marketing initiatives.

The source said SMC could sustain the double-digit growth rate in the beer business "due to favorable sales trending and strong product off-take."

"The division's profit performance is seen to remain favorable given its high operating leverage," the source said.

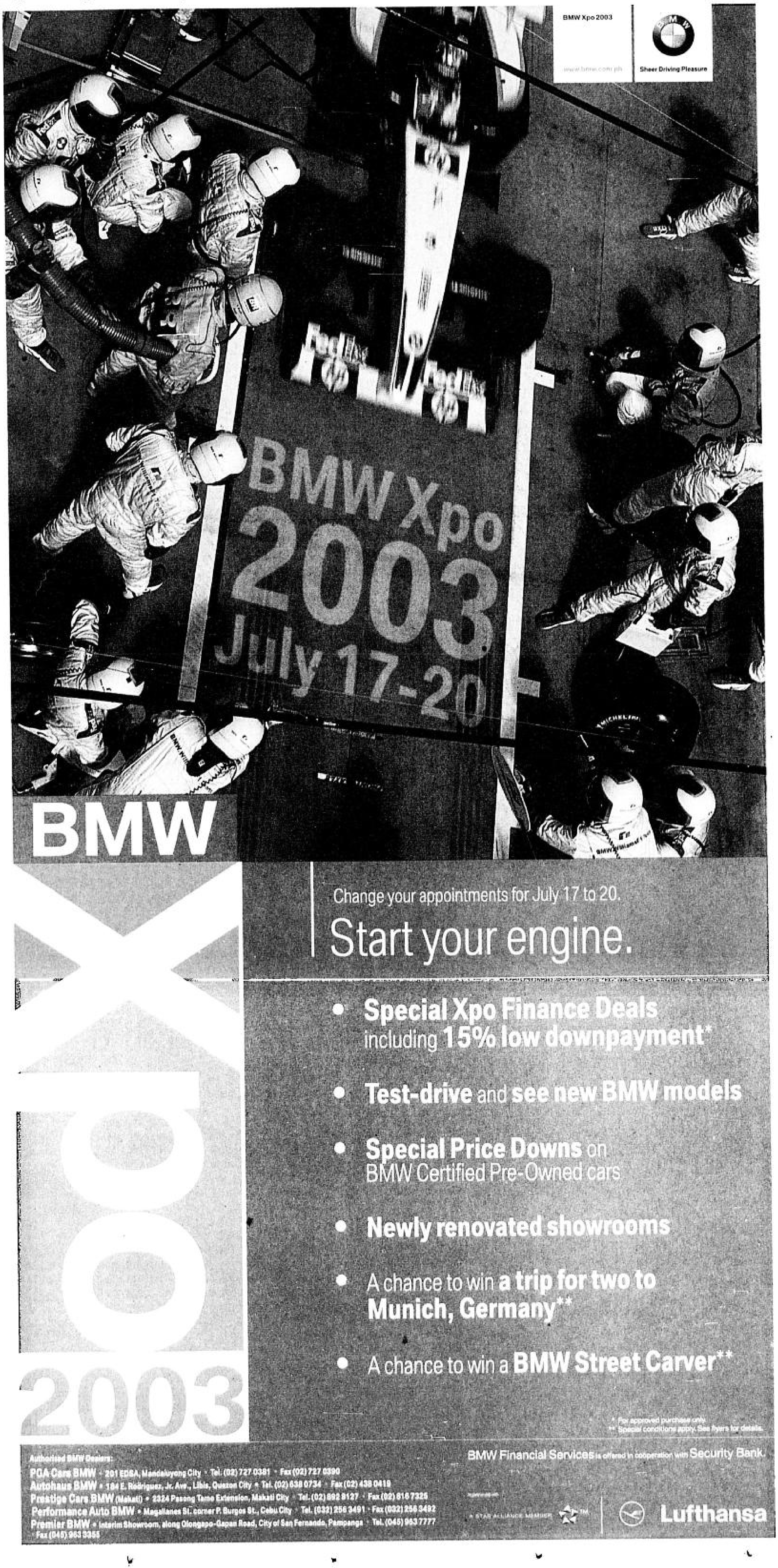
Income from operations could expand significantly due to the business' robust sales performance and favorable production costs mainly on account of stable raw material prices, the source added.

The company achieved a 29-percent growth in operating income at P2.79 billion for the period January to May 2003 from a year ago.

For the first five months of the year, SMC's domestic beer operations chalked up P12.7 billion in revenues or 13-percent better than last year.

Intensive marketing, sales and distribution activities led to an

SMC/ B2



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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER
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Like a ruling stone

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IT WAS like only yesterday, but it was actually some months ago, when Congress pestered the Commission on Audit, or the COA, for an accounting of a special fund.

It was the so-called Judiciary Development Fund, which the ultimate legal authority in the land, the Supreme Court itself, handles.

Now, Congress made the request on COA, even before the Supreme Court got that special treat from the thinning camp of the man named Band…Wrist Band.

The camp of the former President, as you know, is entertaining the idea of treating his best friends in the Supreme Court to an impeachment.

* * *

LUCKILY, the annoying request of Congress on COA reached the head of the Supreme Court—Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. himself.

And so our idol wasted no time. Without much ado, Davide made a decision quickly. He simply told Congress that he himself could not act on the request.

I am sure it had something to do with constitutionality or something. For Davide told Congress that he just had to refer the matter to the Supreme Court en banc.

Nothing, fortunately, happened since then. Maybe the Supreme Court en banc was extremely busy. It had better things to do than account for public funds under its care.

* * *

NOBODY in Congress, you see, knew just exactly how much money was in the fund. Nobody also knew where all that money went.

Yet Congress, supposedly, holds the purse string of the government. And going around at that time were some horror stories about that Supreme Court special fund.

If I remember correctly, a presidential decree—most probably issued during the Marcos dictatorship—created the special fund.

Just the other day, as the headlines told us, the Supreme Court got back at the dictatorship for giving it the burden of having to account for such a special fund.

* * *

ANYWAY, as I understand it, Congress asked COA Chair Guillermo Carague for a complete report on the Supreme Court's collection for the fund.

But more important to Congress was a list of the cash advances, which were apparently made by Supreme Court justices, and how much was still outstanding.

The data would tell Congress, for one, where all the money went. At least the COA should have those data always ready. It is its job, forgodsakes.

I still have to find out why, just to send the data to Congress, the COA needed Davide's permission, while Davide in turn needed that of the Supreme Court en banc.

IN business, of course, nobody believes that certain justices of the Supreme Court are allowing themselves to be used by this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

Maybe they allow themselves to be used by a big faction of the many political stuntmen of this cute administration, maybe without the knowledge of Gloriaetta herself.

But talk in business is, even if she wants to, Gloriaetta cannot do anything. She is losing control over her own political stuntmen.

They fear that, as her term nears its end, she is getting more and more isolated.

Will the stuntmen ever stop? This is voted as the most feared scenario in business today.

The political situation may become so fluid, the leader of the land does not have complete control anymore. I suggest you better fix your visa soon.

* * *

THERE must be a reason why, all of a sudden, after 17 long years, one after another, the judiciary must toss out a couple of monumental rulings.

Like they were rolling stones, as they come out one by one, they are now gathering momentum in media, creating some sensational news.

The latest was that tiny pinch of P36 billion from the massive Marcos wealth. Before this "good news" was the ruling that the coconut levy fund was "public" after all.

The fund happens to be directly associated with a known Marcos crony, Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., chair and CEO of San Miguel.

Not too long ago, as if by coincidence, Danding revealed for the first time in public that he was testing the political waters for 2004. Wrong move!

* * *

ALL RIGHT, the talk in business puts Danding at close talking range with Gloriaetta. The two apparently understand each other. They are not fighting.

It is even said that Gloriaetta will get Danding's support, in case she decides to run in 2004. And if Gloriaetta does not run, she will likely support Danding.

Rumor has it that a former banker acted as go-between in the arrangement. Apparently, some groups did not like the idea. They must undermine it.

For if it happens, they will no longer be in control. Losing control will mean giving up a big fortune. For there is still some huge vast fortune to be made out there.

IN the meantime, from what I heard, certain Supreme Court justices are consulting some lawyers regarding the impeachment move of Wrist Band.

Word has it, Danding's political party, the Nationalist People's Coalition, can definitely become a factor for any impeachment to prosper.

In the House of Representatives, the NPC faction can gather more than 100 votes to proceed with the impeachment.

Congressmen are saying that the camp of Wrist Band needs only about 70 or so votes to get their dream scenario going.

Even if nothing comes out of it, it becomes another media circus, That's bad for the Supreme Court, for this cute administration, and for business. In short, it is bad for us.

* * *

AS a matter of fact, Gloriaetta herself personally asked Danding about his position on the impeachment of certain Supreme Court justices.

I heard that Danding assured her that, to him and to almost the entire nation, she is the legitimate President of the Republic.

For the impeachment of certain Supreme Court justices has something to do with the legitimacy of Gloriaetta's presidency.

Thus, speculation goes around that, to force Danding's hand in supporting Gloriaetta, they have better jump the gun on him. Let's just seize his fortune.

* * *

IN the stock market, fortunately, despite the rumor that Danding's shares in San Miguel are now in the line of fire, the price of San Miguel shares are holding.

Maybe the stock market believes Danding when he said that he will fight any attempt to wrest control of San Miguel from him.

Media reports both here and abroad said that it will not be that easy to get Danding out of San Miguel.

For one, as a board member, he has a one-year term. The latest he can be booted out of the company—legally—will be in May next year. That's already election time.

* * *

BUT what if they arrest Danding, just like the threat on another prospective presidential candidate from the opposition, Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

With talk of "plunder" cases against Danding up in the air, he can be made to take a long rest in a government hospital, at the very least. You know—like Wrist Band.

Now if the intention of the political stuntmen is to make Danding run away from politics, preferably with his tail between his legs, not many think it will work.

Sure, winning in 2004 will be harder for him, if he loses his resources at this time. Still, it will only force him to run the more. He has nothing to lose anymore.

High court to review Cyber Bay case

LAWYERS of Central Bay Reclamation and Development Corp. (Cyber Bay or formerly Amari Coastal Bay Development Corp.) have asked the Supreme Court to allow them to orally argue the company's case when the high court starts hearing Cyber Bay's second motion for reconsideration.

The company filed an urgent "Motion for Hearing Oral Arguments" on July 2, 2003.

The high court nullified the real estate company's contract with the Philippine Estate Authority (PEA) to reclaim some 750 hectares of land from the shores of Manila Bay. Cyber Bay appealed and lost the case.

While recognizing that the high court ruling was final, Cyber Bay filed its second motion for reconsideration arguing that the legal issues involved in the case were of "paramount significance" because they affected not only the Amari-PEA project, but all other reclamation projects elsewhere.

Cyber Bay cited previous jurisprudence in which the high court allowed a second review of the case it had ruled against.

The high court saw merits in Cyber Bay's pleadings and would soon start reviewing Cyber Bay's case.

DIRECT MARKETING FORUM

Philippine Daily Inquirer sponsors the 3rd Direct Marketing Forum, the biggest gathering of direct marketing practitioners in the country, on Aug. 26-27 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Topics and case studies range from the latest marketing trends to implementing out-of-the-box strategies. The roster of speakers include Ogilvy Interactive's CEO Kent Wertime and creative director Shane Weaver. Shown after the signing of the sponsorship agreement are (from left): INQUIRER's corporate relations manager Celine Madamba, Ardy Roberto, founder of Direct Marketing Forum, INQUIRER president and CEO Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez and Dickie Soriano, president of BCD Marketing Inc.

PLDT net profit down 34% in 1st half due to provisions for layoffs, failed investments

By Abigail L. Ho

TELECOMMUNICATIONS giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) reported an unexpected 34-percent decline in first-half net profit after provisions for job layoffs and investment losses wiped out a tripling of mobile phone earnings.

PLDT said its earnings before provisions rose to P6.6 billion from P2.8 billion in the first six months of 2002 on the growth in the net income of mobile phone unit Smart Communications Inc.

But net profit fell to P1.78 billion after provisions of P4.8 billion to account for staff retrenchment and losses on investments. Nearly 30 percent or P1.2 billion of the provisions were for its manpower reduction program. In the first half of 2002, PLDT posted earnings after provisions of P2.71 billion.

More than P3.5 billion was for the write-down of its investments and assets in Unilink/Philippine Home Cable Holdings Inc. and satellite telecommunications service providers ACeS Philippines and ACeS International Ltd. as well as receivables from Philcom Corp.

The provisions were supposed to be spread up to the third quarter of the year, but PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said in a briefing yesterday that management chose to book these now while the company's earnings were very strong.

"PLDT is also operating on an international environment. Because of Enron, standards of disclosure have become more stringent. Also, by 2005, Philippine companies should reflect (foreign exchange impact) on the (profit and loss statement). We better face it now and book the provisions instead of waiting until 2005," he said.

PLDT is cleaning up its balance sheet in preparation for the country's adoption of the US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) in 2005 as well as more stringent regulatory, auditing and disclosure requirements both here and abroad.

"While we have booked significant provisions in the first half of 2003, I would emphasize that with the exception of the (retrenchment) provision, these are principally non-cash in nature and, as such, will not affect our ongoing debt reduction program," Pangilinan said.

There would be no more provisions for the rest of the year, he said, as everything that needed to be provided for had already been booked during the first half.

Analysts said they were disappointed by the size of the provisions, but welcomed the surprisingly strong operating earnings. They had forecast a net profit of around P5.1-P5.2 billion for the first half and earnings before provisions of about P6 billion.

Pangilinan expressed confidence that the company could still achieve its full-year net income target of P10 billion.

He added that the company was also likely to hit its P90-billion revenue target for the group as consolidated revenues during the first six months of the year had already reached P46.2 billion.

Cashflow indicator earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization likewise grew 12 percent to P25.3 billion in the January-to-June period from P22.5 billion in the same period last year.

The PLDT group's strong showing was buoyed by the sterling performance of cellular subsidiary Smart Communications, which posted a net income of P6.1 billion on revenues of P22.1 billion.

It now has more than 10.3 million subscribers, including those of sister firm Pilipino Telephone Corp.'s Talk 'N Text brand. Smart alone has 8.1 million subscribers, cornering a 45-percent share of the market.

The PLDT group was also able to repay $165 million in debts in the first half, including $60 million for Smart.

Pangilinan said the company was on track to meeting its $115-million debt obligations for the rest of the year.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 16, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	8,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	19.25	19.25	19	19	101,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48	48	47.5	48	308,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34.5	35	34.5	35	285,200
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	180,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	31	31.5	245,200
Philippine National Bank	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	20,100
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.75	14	13.75	13.75	26,800
Security Bank Corp.	17	17.75	17	17.75	93,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	21	21.75	21	21.5	340,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	430,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3	3	2.95	2.95	25,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	199	199	199	199	90
Manulife Financial Corp.	1455	1455	1455	1455	150
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.78	1.12	0.78	0.99	670,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1040	1050	1040	1050	1,190
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22.25	22.5	22.25	22.5	22,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.69	3,080,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	690	700	690	700	80,650
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.047	0.046	0.047	1,700,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	1,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.57	5,840,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	550	560	545	555	69,490
Ivantage Corp.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	230,000
Philweb Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	12.75	12.75	12.25	12.5	618,300
Manila Electric Co. B	18.5	18.5	17.75	18.25	1,582,600
Petron Corp.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.16	6,720,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	89,000
Keppel Phils. Marine, Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	400,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	470,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	10,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	23,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	699,600
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	51.5	52	51.5	52	67,400
San Miguel Corp. B	60	60.5	59.5	60	63,600
Universal Robina Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	11,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.225	0.24	0.225	0.24	240,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	170,000
Ayala Corp.	4.85	4.9	4.8	4.9	104,178,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.65	2.65	2.6	2.6	53,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.036	0.036	0.033	0.033	5,900,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.69	0.7	0.67	0.7	1,430,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	43,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.98	1.92	1.98	148,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.68	0.72	0.68	0.69	38,680,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	4,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	17.25	17.5	16.5	17	1,354,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	0.0775	600,000
Ionics Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.36	1.36	535,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.72	122,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	610,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	10,110,000
Music Corp.	0.43	0.45	0.4	0.41	17,720,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.28	270,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.6	1,830,000
Manila Jockey Club	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	8,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.25	650,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	110,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22.5	22.75	22.5	22.5	367,300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	7,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	5,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	580	580	580	580	10
Property					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.1	4,805,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.18	0.18	170,000
Cebu Holdings Inc	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	30,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	6,900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	1,860,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	7,292,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.145	350,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	350,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	6.1	6	6	2,323,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	880,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	140,000
Omico Corp.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	30,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	320,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,000,000
Interport Res.	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0034	0.0032	0.0034	42,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	7,000,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	5,000,000

DISCLOSURES

BANK of the Philippine Islands declared a cash dividend of P0.80 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of July 30 and will be payable on Aug. 14.

* * *

CHARLES Yap Giok Twee resigned as director of Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.

* * *

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission approved the increase in Far Eastern University's capital stock from P300 million to P1 billion. Out of the increase, a 65-percent stock dividend was issued in favor of stockholders of record as of July 25.

* * *

THE BOARD of PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. approved the buy-back shares program of the company reasoning that market prices do not reflect the true value of its shares and so shareholders would benefit from a buy-back into treasury.

* * *

THE BOARD of Equitable PCI Bank Inc. confirmed the appointment of Peter Go Palilan as acting president and director of the bank's wholly owned subsidiary, Equitable Savings Bank Inc. Also approved was the appointment of Ma. Susanna Yap as senior vice president. ***Compiled by Maricar Tolosa, PDI Research***

INTEREST RATES

July 16, 2003-MART1 Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 16-Jul-03	MART1 15-Jul-03
1 Month	6.2714	6.2643
3 Months	6.3446	6.3429
6 Months	7.2893	7.2714
1 Year	7.866	7.887
2 Years	8.8333	8.855
3 Years	9.4696	9.4875
4 Years	9.9683	9.9589
5 Years	10.2233	10.2333
7 Years	11.0533	11.089
10 Years	11.4283	11.4342
20 Years	11.9642	11.965
25 Years	12.3717	12.3617

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

SMC beer sales . . .

From page B1

11-percent improvement in beer sales for the period.

The beer division accounts for about a quarter of SMC's total revenues. It is also the conglomerate's flagship product which enjoys 90 percent of the beer market in the Philippines.

Analysts said that SMC's strong domestic beer sales can compensate for any losses the group would incur from its China brewery operations, which the company earlier admitted were affected by a decline in tourism and consumer spending due to the outbreak of the killer virus SARS.

SMC, partly owned by Japan's Kirin Brewery Co. Ltd., has four breweries in China and Hong Kong, as well as a glass plant, a bottle crown line and a plastics plant in China. *Doris C. Dumlao*

FROM $1.7-B SURPLUS IN 2002

6-mo balance of payments deficit hits $616M

THE COUNTRY'S balance-of-payments position registered a deficit of $82 million in June, bringing to $616 million the BOP gap in the first half of the year.

The six-month BOP position this year was a reversal of the $1.73- billion surplus registered in the same period last year.

Monetary officials, however, stressed that the country's external payments position would likely improve in the coming months due to the fresh dollar inflow expected from the $750-million global bond issue of the government as well as the potential windfall from the Supreme Court's decision on Marcos wealth.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the BOP was likely to register a deficit of $1.13 billion this year on expectations of reduced dollar inflow against increased debt payments. Last year, the external payments hit a surplus of $660 million.

In May, the BOP deficit stood at only $15 million.

Closely-watched by investors, the BOP indicates the country's ability to settle its obligations. It is influenced by two items—current account (reflecting the movement of trade) and capital and financial account (representing the flow of investments and borrowings).

A deficit in the BOP means that the dollar outflow was more than the inflow. The dollar outflow and inflow is a result of trade, investments and borrowings. A strong payments position helps stabilize the local currency as it staves off demand for dollars.

The BOP position is calculated using two indicators—change in net international reserves and revaluation of gold.

The central bank is counting on government borrowings to help boost the dollar reserves as well as the external payments position. The finance department, however, reduced its remaining foreign financing requirement to $400 million from $900 million.

Sky, Home Cable to close deal

By Abigail L. Ho

SKYCABLE Central CATV Inc. and Philippine Home Cable Holdings Inc. are expected to formalize their merger before the end of this year with most issues facing their parent companies already resolved.

Manuel Pangilinan, president and chief executive of Home Cable parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., yesterday said that talks between the two cable firms were moving quite well, possibly well enough to close a deal within the year.

"I think we've resolved most of the issues with respect to the combination of Sky and Home. I'm quite optimistic that combination will happen. There's more than 50-percent probability of this pushing through," he told reporters at the sidelines of the presentation of PLDT's first-half results.

SkyCable and Home Cable have consolidated some of their functions by virtue of a master consolidation agreement signed by PLDT and the Lopez group in 2001.

The consolidated firm is now known as Beyond Cable Holdings Inc.

However, the two firms still kept separate books and some of their functions had not been totally integrated.

Pangilinan explained that Beyond Cable would own 100 percent of both SkyCable and Home Cable. At this point, however, legal and valuation issues would have to be resolved for the merger to push through.

Both companies are currently restructuring P2.5 billion worth of secured and unsecured debts. On its debt restructuring proposal, Beyond Cable sought an additional two-year grace period, payment rescheduling, as well as a reduction on interest rates on all its debts.

Since December last year, Beyond Cable has been in constant discussion with its different creditor-banks to explain its business plan and to fast-track the approval of its debt restructuring proposal.

The source said the creditors were "amenable" to the restructuring proposal and that an agreement would likely be signed soon.

"They seem to be making progress. It's just a question of where fresh funds will come from," the source said.

In an earlier interview, SkyCable chair Eugenio Lopez III said the infusion of new cash into Beyond Cable would help its creditors decide to approve its restructuring proposal.

"We need more cash. The (memorandum of agreement on the debt restructuring) will be on the premise that there's new cash coming into the company," he said.

He revealed that a third-party investor had already expressed interest in joining the Beyond Cable consortium, although he declined to name the company.

Bourse opens DDT facility

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange yesterday launched a dollar-denominated trading (DDT) facility, initially limited to shares of dominant telecommunications carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., amid lukewarm response from investors.

Investors largely ignored the DDT due to concerns over possible complications in the settlement and pricing of the transactions.

"I think there's a problem in settlement procedures. It's too cumbersome compared to regular trading," said Joseph Roxas, president of Eagle Equities Inc. and a former PSE director and listing committee chair.

He also said it would be difficult for Tektite-based brokers to open the required account with sole DDT custodian Deutsche Bank.

"The fluctuation is also inaccurate. The DDT follows the fluctuations of peso stocks but remember it's (denominated) in dollars. In common stocks, fluctuations amount to only P5, but it gets bigger there because of the exchange rate conversion," Roxas said.

There was only one transaction of PLDT shares at the DDT yesterday, consisting of 300 shares done at $10.25 per share.

PSE president Ernest Leung, however, said in a briefing that the PSE may soon consider listing shares of even those companies that are not yet listed abroad, to allow multiple currency trading.

Leung said the plan would have to be approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

PSE chair Alicia Rita Arroyo also noted that the DDT was meant to expand the market for Philippine issues over the long-term and diversify the PSE's product offerings.

She assured that the facility would not affect the offshore liquidity of PLDT shares whose American Depository Receipts are also listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Eric Alberto, head of PLDT business solutions, said the telecommunications giant listed on the DDT to capitalize on the interest from two new market segments.

"It can also be for local investors who have dollar accounts and have appetite for PLDT risk but don't want to carry exchange rate conversion risks," he stressed.

The main objectives of the PSE in launching the DDT are:

- elimination of currency or foreign exchange risks;
- greater flexibility in the present trading infrastructure by allowing multiple currencies for trade transactions;
- elimination of the need for costs of conversion for American Depository Receipts; and,
- preparation for cross-border trading.

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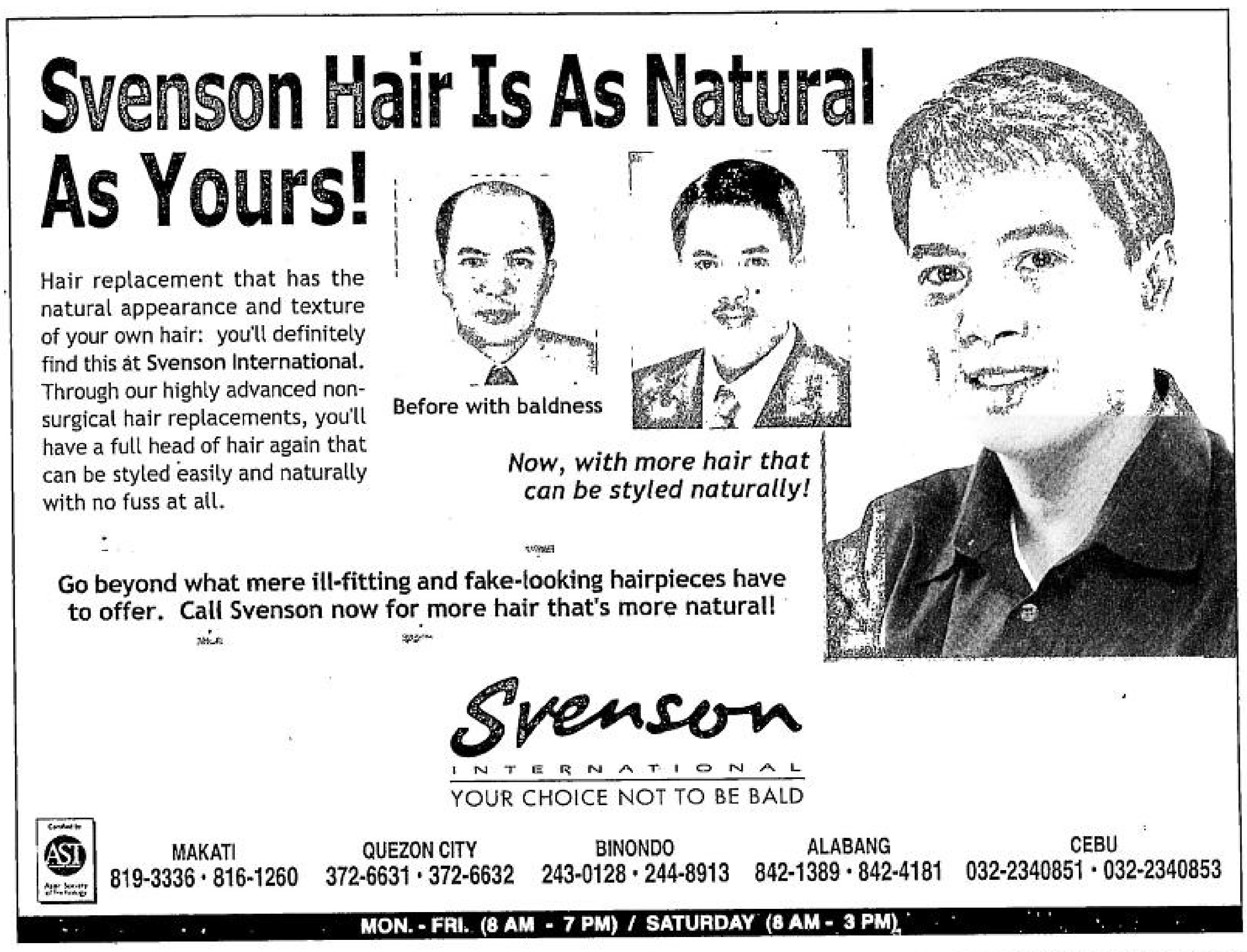

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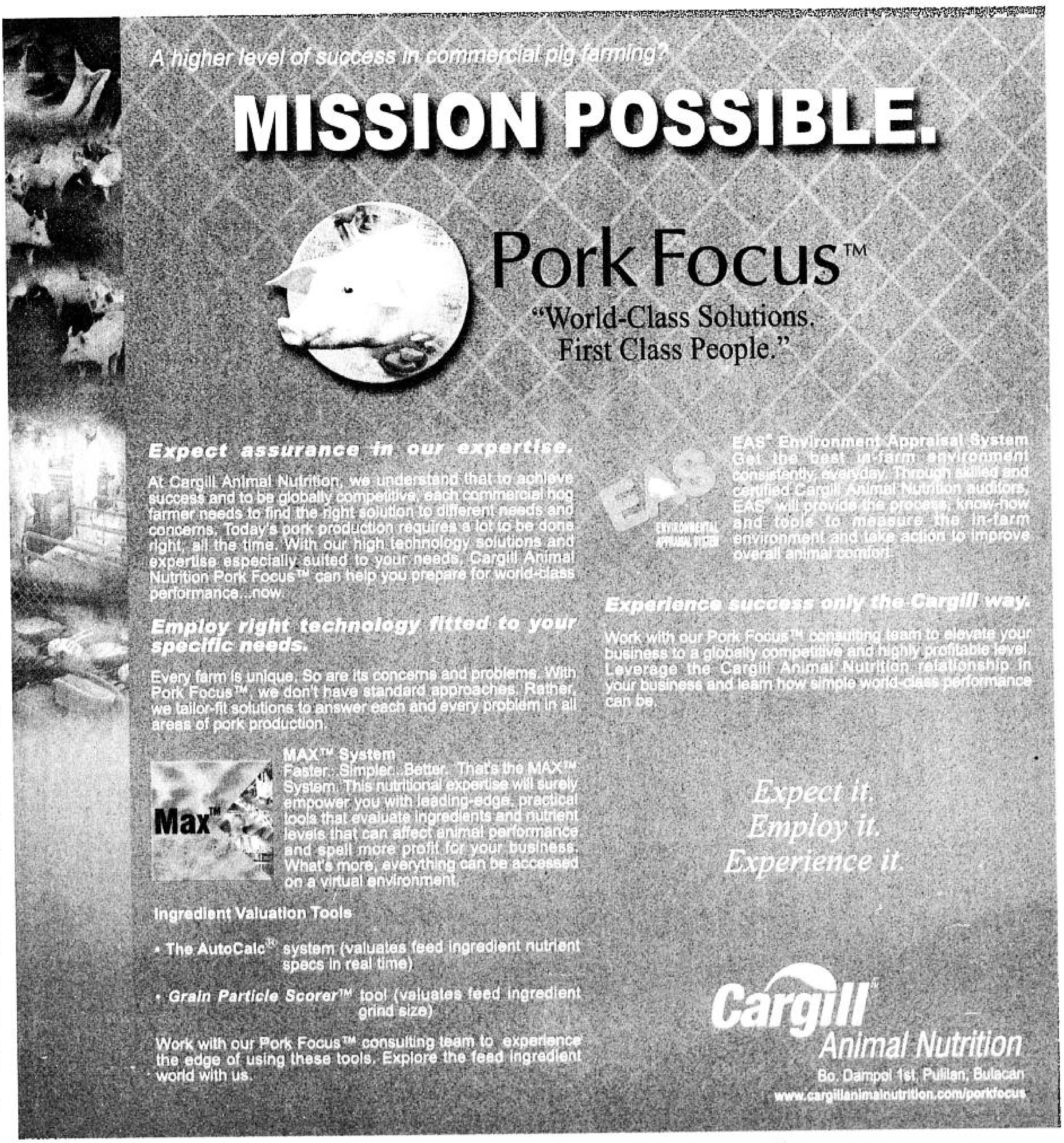

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RP resumes participation in Cairns group efforts

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES has acceded to Australia's request to resume an active role in the Cairns group which has stepped up its lobbying efforts against the European Union's farm subsidies ahead of the World Trade Organization meeting in Cancun in September this year.

In an interview, Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo said the Philippines would join Australia and the Cairns group in making a united front to force EU to open up its countries to more agriculture products especially from developing countries.

Lorenzo explained that while the Philippines might have serious differences with Australia on phyto-sanitary standards on fruit imports, the EU's farm subsidies pose a bigger and far-reaching stumbling block to global agricultural trade that could only be removed through a collective effort.

Lorenzo said that even the recent move by the EU to reform its farm support program to appease its critics and push the WTO discussions further would not be acceptable to the Philippines.

EU officials from its Brussels-headquarters said the reforms in its Common Agriculture Policy, which will continue to give direct payments to farmers on a fixed rather than on production volume basis, were aimed at cutting domestic support by 55 percent, slashing budgetary outlays on export subsidies by 45 percent, and reducing tariffs by an average of 36 percent.

The EU officials said the reforms were the most substantial offer made by any developed country.

EU officials also cautioned the Philippines and developing countries from accepting the US and Australian propaganda hook, line and sinker. EU officials said that Europe remained as the world's largest importer of agriculture goods and it is a net importer of agricultural products.

The Philippines had previously threatened to bolt the Cairns group after it found little support from members when the country fought to gain fair access for the country's tuna exports to Europe two years ago. It has also been critical of Australia's double standards in agriculture trade.

Lorenzo clarified that the Philippines has not yet filed a case with the WTO dispute settlement board against Australia. He said the Philippines merely made a request for the formation of a dispute panel as it has yet to decide what case it would file—whether it would be specific for bananas or pineapples or generic to include all fruits. He said that while the Philippines had agreed to settle the issue with Australia on a bilateral basis, it wanted to show how far the country was willing to go to gain market access.

Budget deficit fell to P5B in June

THE MACAPAGAL administration stands a good chance of containing the budget deficit this year within the P180-billion ceiling, as the fiscal gap in June fell to P5 billion, its lowest monthly level since December 2001.

The budget gap in June was also way below the P15-billion monthly ceiling of the government.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, however, said the government would stick to its P202-billion deficit projection this year despite the trend. In 2002, the fiscal gap swelled to P210.7 billion against a target of P130 billion.

"It is too early (to make any change). We are keeping our targets but the numbers are really looking good," said the finance chief in an interview.

The government stands a better chance of addressing any fiscal problem with the possibility that it could tap into the Marcos wealth that is presently deposited in escrow with Philippine National Bank.

The ill-gotten wealth was earmarked for agrarian reform projects. But while it is still unused by the sector, Camacho said the government could tap it to pay debts and reduce the deficit.

Higher revenues and a tighter control on spending enabled the government to contain its deficit to about P80 billion in the first half against a target of P102.2 billion. As of May, the fiscal gap stood at P75.4 billion.

In the first quarter, the budget gap of P58.9 billion exceeded the ceiling of P55.2 billion.

The Bureaus of Internal Revenue and Customs, which account for more than 90 percent of annual collection, exceeded their respective targets of P31.79 billion and P8.26 billion in June.

Spending during the month, according to budget officials, was well within the P57-billion ceiling.

A source explained that the government would maintain its deficit target this year to give the budget department sufficient room to fund important expenditure items.

Persistence key to career in accountancy

THOSE interested in pursuing a career in accountancy will find a vast window of opportunity laid out before them. The nature of the profession takes one to all kinds of businesses—small- and middle-sized firms to multinational conglomerates, NGOs and government enterprises. An accountant who decides to work for an auditing firm can expect to deal with clients from a diverse range of industries.

Such is true in the case of Tina Bautista, a 26-year-old accountant who works as a senior associate in the assurance division of KPMG Laya Mananghaya and Co. She joined the firm right after graduation from UST, deciding early on that she will take every opportunity available to enhance her professional skills.

Dealing with people

On her first project, she requested to be involved in client meetings, even when staff members did not have to be present. "I wanted to see how it was to interface with clients. I didn't say anything during the meeting but I was excited to be there. I knew I was where I wanted to be."

The initial experience proved to be just the beginning for Tina who, on most days, has a full schedule of client meetings.

"I consider meeting various executives from top companies as one of the perks of the job. With clients, there is no specific formula—every project calls for flexibility and adjustment to the client's environment. A client can be as corporate as can be, while another can be downright casual. You have to be able to adjust. The key is to be courteous in dealing with all the people you work with. One can't be pleasant only to the CEO. One has to extend the same courtesy to everyone."

Tina stresses the importance of being able to handle multi-tasking. Business assurance or audit work entails doing many different things for various clients. It includes simultaneous management of different client service teams.

Exciting, fun

However, Tina insists that contrary to popular belief, accounting can be exciting and fun.

"Of course, this may not be true for everyone. Audit work requires commitment, but gives personal and professional satisfaction," she says. "You not only learn about the technical aspects of the industry but you also learn about people, the economy and the country."

BAUTISTA

For her, work does not begin and end with paperwork. "More than just handing in a report, fostering good working relationships with clients is important. I think in audit, you can never stop. There's no way but to go up."

Tina observes that fresh graduates sometimes have a tendency to get restless. She notes that new hires with great potential do well initially only to quit when the going gets tough, especially during November to April, the audit season, which she and her colleagues like to call resigning season.

"Audit is a dynamic field but you have to be persistent to reap the benefits. I don't know how it is in other firms, but in KPMG Laya Mananghaya and Co., the atmosphere is democratic and youthful, which is a big boost. Even if you're just starting out as a staff member you're free to contribute your ideas."

Growing professionally

Come September, Tina is flying to Boston for an 18-month US mobility program, an opportunity that will allow her to train with other accountants from other KPMG affiliates worldwide. This she considers an exciting challenge to grow personally and professionally. "Whatever work you do, there are always difficulties. I suppose ultimately it's all about developing an attitude that will make you simply take on what life throws your way and buckle down to work."

BDO board OKs issuance of notes worth $100M

By Elena R. Torrijos

RETAIL magnate Henry Sy's Banco de Oro Universal Bank, the country's 10th largest bank, yesterday said its board approved the issuance of senior unsecured notes worth $100 in the international capital market.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, BDO corporate information officer Elmer Soriano said that through the issuance of the notes, the bank aimed to "diversify its funding sources, creating a balanced mix of long, medium and short-term funding."

Soriano added that the proceeds of the issue would be used "for general corporate purposes."

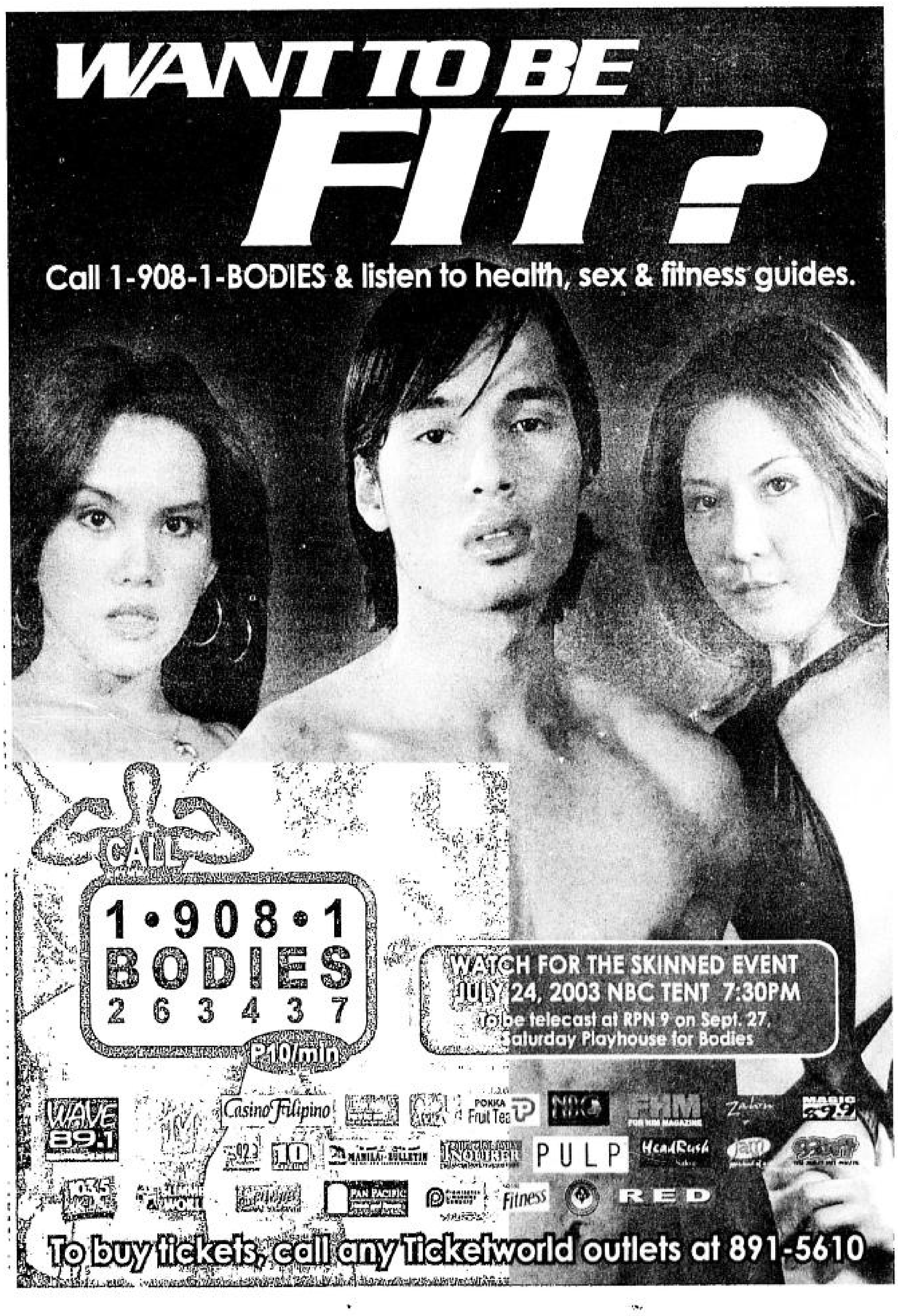
The issuance will be subject to the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The other day, BDO announced it executed agreements to acquire 100 percent of Banco Santander Philippines Inc., a local unit of Spanish banking giant Banco Santander Central Hispano S.A., for P2.56 billion.

Under the terms of the agreements, the universal bank will acquire 88.45 percent of BSPI from BSCH and the other 11.55 percent from other local minority shareholders.

The agreement between BDO and BSCH stipulates that 10 percent of the total capital of BSPI would be retained by BSCH in an escrow account for six to nine months, during which the acquired bank will continue to use the Santander logo although it will already be managed by BDO.

With the acquisition, Serrano said BDO would "gain access to the market of high net worth individuals and grow its private banking business, a niche that BSPI had successfully developed over the years."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SINGAPORE DEMAND

DTI says RP not ready yet with compensation package

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT said it was not ready yet to grant Singapore's demand for compensation, a key to the settlement of the petrochemical dispute between the two Asean countries.

Ramon Vicente Kabigting, director of the Bureau of International Trade Relations, said the government has yet to get the consensus of local industry players as to what product of Singapore would be given preferential tariff of zero to one percent.

Singapore demanded compensation for the Philippines' failure to reduce as scheduled the tariffs on petrochemical products, such as polyethylene, polypropylene and polyvynil chloride resins. Singapore, in a complaint filed with the Afta council, claimed it was adversely affected by the Philippines' decision to defer its tariff reduction.

Tariffs on those products were scheduled for reduction to 5 percent under the Common Effective Preferential Treatment scheme of the Asean Free Trade Area. Instead of reducing the tariffs to 5 percent, the government has brought it down to a range of 7 to 10 percent, from the previous level of 10 to 15 percent.

Philippine and Singapore representatives met in Indonesia over the weekend supposedly to sign a deal on the compensation package. However, the Philippine panel refused to finalize the deal, saying it still needed time to discuss the matter with the private sector.

Kabigting said the government would consult with the local industry in order to protect the interest of both the downstream (plastic product manufacturers) and midstream (resin producers) sectors.

The 180 days given to the Philippines to reach a settlement with Singapore lapsed on June 25. The city-state may now consider retaliatory measures against the Philippines. However, Singapore has to notify the Philippine government of the plan within 60 days before it is carried out. Retaliation could come in the form of higher tariffs on Philippine exports to Singapore.

"Singapore wants to sign an agreement as soon as possible because they said the last thing they want to do is to retaliate, but they will be forced to do so if we do not come up with something before the (notification) period lapses" said Kabigting in a briefing.

NTC seeks review of telecom laws

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has admitted that local regulations have not been able to keep up with technological advances over the years, making the need to revisit and possibly amend old laws quite pressing at this time.

NTC deputy commissioner Jorge Sarmiento said the pace at which technology was advancing was faster than the change in industry regulations.

"There's a regulatory lag. The technology is there, but regulation is often left behind," he said.

He cited the voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) as an example of technology that was facing a brick wall because of "regulatory lag."

VoIP is a voice service that uses the Internet as a medium instead of the public switched telephone network. According to Republic Act No. 7925 or the Public Telecommunications Policy Act of the Philippines, only licensed telecommunications carriers are allowed to offer this service to the public.

Some sectors, including Internet service provider group Philippine Internet Services Organization (PISO), have been asking the NTC for a clarification on the matter. As ISPs, they have the capability to commercially offer VoIP but current laws do not allow them to do so.

"This service should only be offered by telecommunications firms. The issue here is the land line obligation. But maybe (certain compromise points) can be made, like (potential VoIP service providers) can just roll out tele centers instead of land lines," Sarmiento said.

He admitted, however, that the NTC might have a hard time skirting around existing regulations as the rule on VoIP was not a simple memorandum circular that the regulatory body could amend. Regulations on VoIP were contained in a law that would need legislation to change.

"The NTC is seriously looking at lifting the ban because of technological pressures. But we need an amendment to the law. Our hands are tied. Eventually we'll have to study it also. Something has to be done. We'll study the matter," he said.

Panel to meet to ask if US recession over

WASHINGTON—An elite panel of academics viewed as the arbiters of US recessions will meet on Wednesday to consider whether the downturn that began in March 2001 has ended.

A spokesperson for the National Bureau of Economic Research said members of the Business Cycle Dating Committee would gather in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for the meeting

The gathering comes as some private economists have speculated the NBER may be getting closer to declaring the 2001 downturn has ended.

One hint a decision may be drawing nearer is an NBER statement in a recent memo on its Web site that the panel placed "considerable weight" on the performance of gross domestic product.

That was a switch from previous statements by the academic group that tended to play down GDP as an indicator of business cycles and focused instead on measurements such as payroll employment and personal income.

One dilemma for the NBER is that GDP, which measures the amount of goods and services produced within US borders, and payroll employment are giving seemingly contradictory signals about the business cycle. *Reuters*

Greenspan pledges low rates, sees faster US economic growth

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan vowed on Tuesday to keep US interest rates low for a long time even as he predicted a hearty economic recovery.

He told Congress the Fed officials might cut official borrowing costs below their current 45-year low of 1 percent if they need to prevent deflation.

Greenspan eschewed for now more dramatic actions such as buying long-term US bonds.

Indeed, he said the economy "could very well be embarking on a period of extended growth," meaning such aggressive measures probably will not be needed.

An upbeat economic view in the Fed chief's semiannual monetary policy testimony sent US Treasuries prices tumbling.

The 10-year bond's yield, which moves in the opposite direction to the price, posted the biggest one-day rise since October 1998.

The pullback in bonds put a damper on the recent stocks rally. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 48 points to 9,129. The tech-laced Nasdaq Composite lost 2 points 1,753.

Speaking to the House of Representatives Financial Services Committee, Greenspan said the central bank "stands prepared to maintain a highly accommodative stance of policy for as long as needed to promote satisfactory economic performance." "We would seek significant improvement in the performance from what we currently see before (a rate increase) is even on the table," he said.

It is highly unusual for Greenspan to offer an outlook for interest rates over an extended period of time. He tends to prefer to keep his options open.

Many analysts were also struck by the Fed's forecasts for the US economy. Policy-makers predicted gross domestic product growth of 2.5 percent to 2.75 percent in 2003.

Given the slim GDP gains so far this year, the figures imply a sharp rebound in coming months.

"The Fed's forecast for the second half has to be close to 4 percent," said Roger Kubarych, economic adviser to Hypo-Vereins Bank. Many private economists have issued more cautious forecasts.

GDP rose at an annual rate of 1.4 percent in the first three months of this year. The government has not yet tallied second-quarter GDP but experts think the growth rate could mirror the first quarter.

The Fed pegged GDP growth in 2004 at 3.75 percent to 4.75 percent.

Greenspan did warn of some hazards the US economy faces, including spillover from economic woes in Japan and Europe. *Reuters*

Dollar rallies, bonds plunge after Fed talk

SINGAPORE—The dollar climbed to two-month highs on Wednesday and bond prices tumbled after Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan downplayed deflation dangers and forecast stronger US growth.

Asian stocks took a cue from Wall Street's lower close as the markets digested Greenspan's comments and the effect higher bond yields might have on banks and corporate borrowers.

Bonds were sold off after Greenspan predicted the US economy "could very well be embarking on a period of extended growth" and after the White House warned the budget deficit would balloon to $455 billion this fiscal year and swell again in 2004.

The world's biggest economy showed more signs of bouncing back from its Iraq-war related slump, with retail sales accelerating in June and weekly reports suggesting consumer spending is perking up.

A weak outlook from mobile phone maker Motorola hit US stocks, although tech bellwether Intel reported a doubling in second-quarter earnings after the close.

Asia's computer-related shares were mostly up on Intel's result, with Tokyo Electron tacking on 1.33 percent and Taiwan's Acer jumping 2.0 percent. But the sell-off in the bond markets was hurting banks, which tend to hold a lot of government debt.

Japan's Nikkei average was down 0.9 percent at 9,663.07 at the midday break. The broader TOPIX index was down 0.69 percent at 948.27.

"We are seeing the positive effect of the Intel earnings largely limited to semiconductor-related firms and the like," said Masaharu Sakudo, adviser at Tachibana Securities.

Intel's earnings announcement sent its shares up more than six percent in after-hours trade.

Shares in Taiwan rose 1.12 percent and Singapore was up 0.19 percent. South Korea was flat, though Samsung Electronics , the world's biggest memory chip maker, jumped 1.23 percent. Hong Kong and Australia were lower.

The blue-chip Dow Jones industrials shed 0.52 percent, to end at 9,128.97. The broad Standard & Poor's 500 slipped 0.34 percent to 1,000.42, while the tech-laced Nasdaq Composite shed 0.09 percent, to finish at 1,753.21. *Reuters*

CLERKS work in the Euro dollar futures trading pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange following Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan's address. Greenspan told the House Financial Services Committee in Washington that the Fed is ready to cut interest rates further if needed to boost economy. AP

Europe needs to go for growth

BRUSSELS—A team advising European Commission President Romano Prodi is set to call for growth to be given as much emphasis as budget discipline in a report that looks at how to boost the economy, EU sources said.

The report by the advisory group of economists set up by Prodi in mid-2002 will be released on Thursday, just days after French President Jacques Chirac called for a temporary loosening of the Stability and Growth Pact to cope with sluggish economic activity.

"Growth must become Europe's number one economic priority, not only in the declarations of its leaders but first and foremost in their actions," said the report's draft introduction, which was obtained by Reuters.

"The Group views Europe's unsatisfactory growth performance during the last decades as a symptom of its failure to transform into an innovation-based economy," it added, urging more labor mobility, R&D spending and greater reliance on market financing. *Reuters*

Japan's CB upgrades assessment

TOKYO—Japan's central bank has slightly upgraded its economic assessment for the first time in a year, saying Wednesday that exports are no longer falling as global uncertainty gradually fades.

But the Bank of Japan maintained a cautious view in the months ahead, acknowledging that prospects for recovery depend on events in the United States and the rest of the world.

The Bank of Japan said uncertainties over the global economy were dwindling because of the containment of SARS and the end of the Iraq war.

It also gave a better view on exports, saying they remain flat. In its previous report, it had said they were weakening.

A long slowdown has plagued Japan. Some optimistic signs are emerging such as a rise in Tokyo share prices from a plunge to 20-year lows earlier this year. Fears about a looming financial crisis have also lessened after a public bailout of Resona Bank.

Company investments are expected to improve, but consumer spending is flat as people remain cautious about the future.

In a separate economic report last week, the Japanese government maintained its gloomy assessment despite the rally in share prices. *AP*

Australian sentiment surges

SYDNEY—Australian consumer sentiment surged to fresh nine-year highs in July, dashing hopes of an immediate interest rate cut, economists said Wednesday.

The Westpac-Melbourne Institute index of consumer sentiment rose 0.3 percent in July to reach 116.5 points, its highest level since July 1994. The index has now risen more than 19 percent over the past three months.

Westpac global head of economics Bill Evans said widespread expectations of an interest rate cut had boosted consumer confidence in late June.

However, the surprise was that confidence continued to rise in July, even when the rate cut failed to materialize, he said.

"Consumers have been unmoved. With media and general economic speculation that rates are still likely to be cut next month, consumers have lost no confidence."

Evans said given the rise in sentiment, recent weakness in the Australian dollar, the resilience of the housing market and the gradually improving US economy, the RBA was now likely to leave rates on hold for at least another month. *AFP*

Giant Intel's Q2 profit doubles

SAN JOSE, California—Semiconductor giant Intel Corp. said its second-quarter profits doubled from a year ago as stronger-than-expected demand for computer microprocessors offset the weakness of its communications chip business.

It's the third consecutive quarter that Intel has exceeded forecasts, though executives and analysts said there's no evidence to suggest a long-hoped-for upswing in consumer and corporate computer buying.

"I haven't seen a PC upgrade cycle. I haven't seen evidence of corporate (technology) budgets going up," said Andy Bryant, Intel's chief financial officer. "What it really feels like is more of a return of the old days where second halves are a little bigger than first halves, and if you're lucky, enough bigger you get a little bit of underlying growth."

Intel expects third-quarter sales to be between $6.9 billion and $7.5 billion—well above last year's third-quarter revenue of $6.5 billion.

The Santa Clara-based company, also said its investments in research and development during the three-year-long downturn are starting to pay off. *AP*

BMW group senior sales vice president Lueder Paysen (left) shakes hands with Sime Darby Motor Holdings managing director Marc Singleton after the announcement of a joint venture between the two companies in Kuala Lumpur. German luxury car maker BMW unveiled plans to expand in Malaysia as part of moves to strengthen its presence in Asia to double sales to 150,000 units in the next five years. AFP

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the heirs of MERCY B. CATUBIG executed a deed of extrajudicial settlement with waiver of rights duly acknowledged before notary public Patricia Marie De Guzman in Makati City Phils. as Doc 109, Page 22, Book II, Series of 2003 (PDI-July 17, 24 & 31, 2003)

Notice of extrajudicial settlement of the estate of the late AMADO DE LEON among his heirs as per Doc#14 Page#3 Bk#1 series of 2003 of notary public Josephine Bagaoisan of Pasig City PDI 7/3,10,17, 2003

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

NOTICE IS GIVEN THAT PNOC CERT. ISSUED IN FAVOR OF VICTORIANO CRUZ WAS LOST. IF NO CONTEST RECEIVED NEW CERT. WILL BE ISSUED. (PDI-July 10, 17, & 24, 2003)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your perpetual glory. Amen. - RFA

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Da Blues, Da Jazz, Da Way We Were Opens Sangandaan 2003

THE SANGANDAAN Festival successfully opened at the CCP Folk Arts Theater with *Da Blues, Da Jazz, Da Way We Were* which featured sarswela scenes, vaudeville numbers, radio medleys, impersonations, film images, a Carnaval de Manila and dance and song numbers which depicted the different sentiments of the Pinoy towards the American colonization.

Sangandaan continues until the end of July with exhibits and several performances that present the Filipino-Americna experience. *Tongue-in-a-Mood Mo Rin!*, a night of spoofs, stand-up comedies, sing-a-long and impersonations is slated for Sunday, July 13, 8 p.m. at the CCP Main Theater. *Kung Hindi Man (Isang Gabi ng Kundiman)* will serenade the audience with past and present Filipino love songs on July 15, 7:30 p.m. at the CCP Little Theater. *Balangiga Rocks* features the best of Filipino bands on July 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Folk Arts Theater. *Lagi Kitang Mamahalin*, a special tribute to National Artists Lucio San Pedro, Ernani Cuenco, Levi Celerio, Atang dela Rama and Jovita Fuentes, features Sharon Cuneta, Vina Morales, Eugene Villaluz and Regine Velasquez on July 11-23 at the CCP Main Theater at 8 p.m.

SANGANDAAN 2003 Festival opening.

Theater productions also form part of the highlights of the festival. Among them are *The Romance of Magno Rubio* a critically-acclaimed play performed by Obie Awardee Ma-Yi Theater group from July 16-19, 25-26 at 8 p.m. and from 19-20, 26-27 at 3 p.m. at the CCP Tanghalang Huseng Batute and *Oraciones* will be performed by Tanghalang Pilipino, from July 18-19, 25-26, Aug. 1-2 at 8 p.m. and July 19-20, 26-27, Aug. 2-3 at 2:30 p.m. at the CCP Little Theater.

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DEATH NOTICES

BRO. JAMES P. DUNNE, S.J.

Joined his Creator on Monday, July 14, 2003

Interment will be at the Sacred Heart Novitiate Cemetery, Novaliches, Q.C. on Saturday, July 19, 2003 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Church of Gesù, Ateneo de Manila University

DR. BENIGNO G. BALCOS, JR.

Joined his Creator on July 14, 2003 at the age of 67.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 19, 2003 at Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Kalookan City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

DOMINGO MAGAT NUQUI

Joined his Creator on July 15, 2003 at the age of 98.

Interment will take place in Macabebe immediately after the 9:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, July 20, 2003.

DRA. ROBERTA VENADAS HERNANDEZ

UP College of Medicine Class '43 and
former Assistant Director, DOH (Region II)

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 14, 2003 at the age of 82.

Her beloved husband, Manuel (†); children Marc and Del, Nilo and Angie, Agnes and Ian, Belen and Kay, Maning and Marita, Ben and Tess, Bobby and Zay, Paul and Eva; brother Tony; sister Baby (†), Lulu, Connie, Rosing and Cora, in-laws, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City. Interment will be on Sunday, July 20 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Sinaglaya Topacio Reyes
(Sining, Sina)

of Imus, Cavite

(Feb. 27, 1914 – July 2, 2003)

wish to convey their deepest gratitude to all those who came to condole with us in our hour of bereavement and to all those who sent flowers, mass cards, offered prayers & messages of sympathy & who in countless ways provided strength & comfort.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS FREE OBIT DESIGN

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer and World's Food Expo 2003 are working together to come out with a very special supplement that will feature products and services in the food and beverage industry.

This special pull-out section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer is a tabloid sized section (7 cols x 30 cm) and is dedicated to feature the World's Food Expo and the country's growing food industry. This will definitely be the reference of choice.

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The supplement is scheduled for release on August 6, 2003 in line with the opening of WOFEX 2003. In line with this, we are providing you with the following very special advertising rates :

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Mini Job Fair AT GLORIETTA

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Responding to the need to revitalize the marketing sector by creating **New Markets, New Rules, New Strategies** and take advantage of the various opportunities within reach, the **Philippine Marketing Association** will officially celebrate **JULY** to be this year's National Marketing Month.

The **Philippine Marketing Association (PMA)**, with the special participation of **Inquirer's JOB MARKET**, will hold a Trade Exhibit and a **Mini Job Fair** slated on **July 21 to 26, 2003** at the Glorietta Activity Center.

Eight (8) 4 sq. meter panel booths are allotted for the job fair in six (6) days . Job fair participants are given an option to a 3-day or 6-day exhibition. Should you wish to participate and be one the exhibitors, please find below the mini job fair packages:

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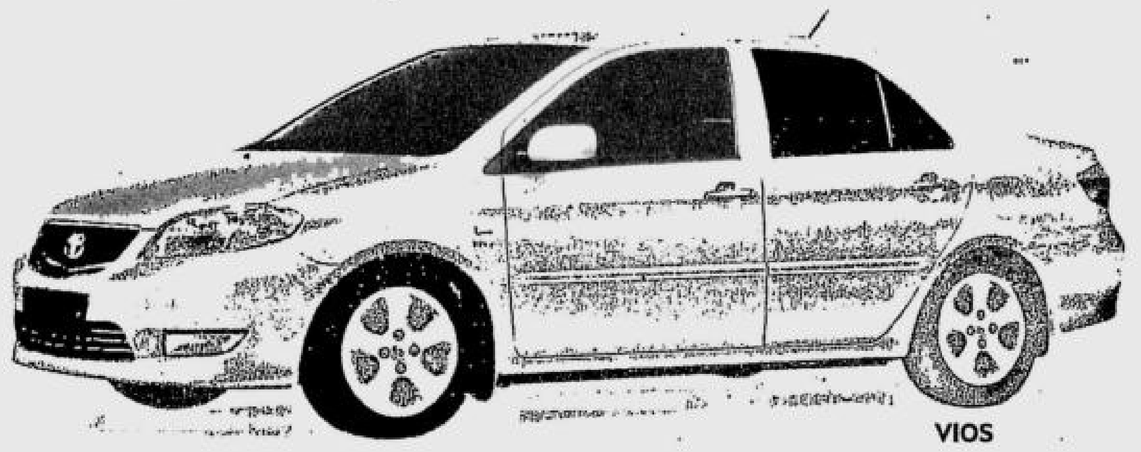
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

TOYOTA VIOS VS HONDA CITY

'Compact' debate rages on the web

CITY



VIOS

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE RACE for the best new compact sedan has moved from the brick-and-mortar streets to the information superhighway. In this realm, the busiest buzz has been that question: "Should I buy a Vios or a City?"

One of the most talked about topics and debates among the automotive enthusiasts is the rivalry between the Toyota Vios and the Honda City.

Welcome development

The arrival of the City and the Vios is a welcome development for auto enthusiasts. It's been quite a while since the automotive market became excited. Whether they admit it or not, manufacturers Toyota and Honda stand to benefit from all this talk.

As of June 3, sales for Vios hit 332 units while for the City, 213 units.

Honda, however, said it had a two-week back order, which it estimates at 600 units. Indeed, many potential buyers the INQUIRER asked have answered they were interested in the City with the CVT.

Toyota supporters, however, doubt if Honda has indeed that much backlog saying it has shipped a significant number of Honda City units since April.

Toyota replied by saying customers for Vios would just have to wait about a week more, as it said it managed its orders well and was right on target, even exceeding its targeted 300 units in its first month.

Car assemblers Toyota and Honda are not the only parties arguing for the merits of their products.

Revving up debate online

Motoring enthusiasts, particularly frequenters of auto websites, are also revving up the debate online. It started a few weeks after both auto giants launched their respective bets in May (May 6 for the City, May 30 for the Vios).

For autoindustriya.com, which averages 1,500 hits a day, the debate for Vios-City raged on for more than a week.

Die hard Honda fans extol the new Honda City with the I-DSI technology (intelligent Dual and Sequential Ignition). Others are mesmerized by its 7-speed mode steermatic, but say in the same breath (or keystrokes) that the Vios looks more like a car than the City, according to Autoindustriya's Brent Co.

The Vios-City debate created a ripple for Motioncars.com, which claims to average 4,000 hits a day.

Motioncars.com's Ulysses Ang said a lot of hits came from the debate on Vios and City at one time.

Toyota Vios info is hard to find in the Net. When Motioncars.com came out with the Vios during its launch, the number of web visitors jumped up. Ang claims Motioncars.com is one of the top search sites for Vios info.

Ang noted both cars belong to the same price range, and sport good features.

What they say

What do Net denizens say about the Vios and the City? Here are some quick comments:

Comparatively inside the hood, the Vios features a 1.5G A/T P678,000, 1.5 M/T P643,000 and 1.3E M/T P578,000. The City has SRP-1.3 A (P539,000); 1.3S M/T with SRS and airbags (P619,000); 1.3 S CVT with SRS and airbag P659,000.)

"Which of the two is better? in terms of engine? Durability, etc."—lantraluvr1, El Car Boss, Posts: 649, (6/18/03 5:30 pm)

"For added safety features...city-casanch, Bog Standard, Posts: 6 (6/19/03 9:11 a.m.)

"In terms of utility na *makukuha mo*—CITY; prestige—go for the Honda—*meron pa rin* thinking *mga tao na* Toyota *lang iyan parang* taxi cannot blame them value for the money—tie

Overall rating—Vios—4; City—9 a.m., El Car Boss Posts: 361, (6/19/03 10:45 p.m.)

"I commend Honda for taking a bold step into coming up with a much more dynamic design for the new City, which was a dramatic leap from its boxy, boring-looking predecessor. But the downside is that it is too tall, and yet again, an ugly tail just like its Civic and Accord siblings. Overall, it looks like a space-age taxi.

"The Vios is simply a baby Altis. Though understated and simple in design, the whole body frame is well-proportioned. I just don't like the body-colored window sashes.

"The City's 7-speed Steermatic gearbox is more of a novelty than a performance tool considering its low-powered engine. It may be as fun as a video game at first, but this techie craze will eventually fade out, so it will most likely not be much of an advantage over the Vios' 4-speed ECT. However, the ride quality may be better in the City because it gets away without shift shocks as a benefit from a CVT (gearless) transmission.

"Also, do not let the 7-speed mislead you. Those are just 7 virtual ratios that simulate a manual gearbox, not 7 real gears. Again, it's more of a short-term toy rather than a performance enhancer.

"The dashboard is much better in the City, and so are trunk space and rear-seat versatility. It's theoretically the first car to sport foldable, detachable back seats that enhance cargo space. This feature makes the car more practical for passengers and their luggage.

"The Vios' seating, on the other hand, is better. Driving position is possibly even more ideal than its tallboy Altis brother. Rear-seat space is a bit better for the passengers as well.

"As for features, the City has optional air bags unlike the Vios. But the Toyota counters that by offering more powerful 1.5-liter engines (the City only has the 1.3). In this aspect, it's a matter of choice between power and safety.

"Performance cannot be evaluated yet in the City because it has an 8-valve DSi engine, which is a new technology from Honda. It has a similar power output to the Vios' 16-valve VVTi engine (same as Echo). The VVTi has proven performance, economy and durability. For now, we'll just have to wait for an actual test.

"Reliability issues are neck-and-neck considering that both Toyota and Honda are great when it comes to quality. But the Vios can probably edge the City in maintenance because parts will eventually be more abundant in several auto shops. Both have 3-year warranty.

"So what's the overall score? It's too close to tell. The test-drive should be the judge here. —skippy, Mid-Range, Posts: 58 (6/24/03 4:30 p.m.)

"My in-laws got a Vios. Exterior-wise, the City looks a bit more sleek because of the usual chrome work put in strategic places whereas the Vios has none.

"The only reason they got the Vios was value for money. For almost the same price, you get a 1.5 auto 4-speed ect vs a 1.3 7-speed cvt. The City is a novelty although at the 1.3 manual category, the City wins. —AM, El Car Boss, Posts: 372 (6/25/03 8:34 a.m.)

In the past 4 days I've seen a total of 4 Toyota Vios (1.3L and 1.5L models) already and 0 Honda Citys....(at UP Diliman and Edsa) Does this mean anything???? Well it sure means something! —calaleu Mid-Range Posts: 94 (6/25/03 10:40 a.m.)

From autoindustriya.com:

View Profile Re: Toyota Vios or Honda City

"*Maka Honda ko pero imo*, I'll probably go for the Vios...why? simply because it has a 1.5 variant, and Honda Phils. will not release the 1.5 variant here only the 1.3.

Sayang, pero kung parehong 1.5, no doubt I'll go for the City.

Iba pa din talaga ang Honda—a.k.a. Wrecker

McIntosh Amps—View Profile Re: Toyota Vios or Honda City" Reply #7 on: June 06, 2003, 06:07:34 p.m.

Better value between the two is the City. But *kung ako tatanungin mo*, I like the Vios better.

Helpful hints on preparing vehicles for emission testing

WITH THE PASSING of the Clean Air Act and the crackdown on smoke-belching violators, there is no other time for your vehicle to meet or exceed emission standards than today.

The government's inspection and maintenance program is requiring all vehicles—in-use motor vehicles, and vehicles with updated/enhanced engine preregistered with the Department of Transportation and Communications and the Land Transportation Office—to undergo mandatory inspection as a requisite for renewal of registration.

Anywhere in the world, motor vehicles are the single largest cause of carbon monoxide pollution. In your typical Metro Manila street, vehicles can cause as much as 70 percent of hydrocarbon emissions and 90 percent of carbon monoxide emissions, according to the LTO.

As such, recent benchmarks have been set to avoid worsening pollution through emission testing. When soot appears for diesel engines or white smoke for gasoline engines, the vehicle automatically receives a failing mark. Soot indicates injector incompatibilities while white smoke means oil mixing with gasoline at combustion.

A properly maintained fuel system is one of the crucial components to keep your vehicle performing like it should. By following a recommended system of basic maintenance on your fuel system, you'll help maximize fuel efficiency, cleanliness and help avoid problems such as rough idling, weak acceleration, stumbling and stalling, thus, making your vehicle ready for that emission test.

The fuel system provides fuel storage in the vehicle, filters out particulates, delivers fuel to the intake air system, and mixes the air and gasoline in the correct ratio to provide the most efficient combustion (i.e., the highest fuel efficiency) in the engine. Optimal use of your fuel is helped by fighting the accumulation of performance-robbing deposits in the system.

You need to use an after-market fuel additive to take care of your engine's deposit problem. Only one brand currently has over 40 years of experience, that its name has been synonymous to quality: STP, which stands for Scientifically Treated Petroleum.

STP fuel additive products are formulated with different amounts of specially designed "detergents" which clean up the engine from unwanted deposits that decrease your vehicle's efficiency.

Vehicles that are not properly maintained or have malfunctioning emission control systems will surely fail the emission testing required by the law. As such, they need specific "vitamins" for their engine. And with a revved up engine, your vehicle is sure to pass not just emission tests but the more rigid challenges of daily driving on Manila's roads.

How safe is your windshield washer solution?

RAINY days are here again and driving in the rain without a windshield washer solution to improve visibility can make driving really hazardous.

Before you buy that gallon of imported windshield washer solution, first make it a point to carefully check out its label. Does it contain any poisonous or flammable ingredients that can spell disaster if not handled with extreme caution?

Most imported windshield washers contain a chemical known as methyl alcohol (or methanol), a highly poisonous substance used as an antifreeze agent, in paint removers and thinners. Also known as wood alcohol, methanol is a clear, colorless, flammable liquid that can be deadly when inhaled or ingested. It can also cause blindness. Pets who lick up this spilled liquid can cause serious complications or even death. Here in the Philippines alone, several people have already died or gone blind by simply drinking fake liquor laced with this deadly chemical. Also, its being a flammable liquid can pose some danger to the motorist, especially if the vehicle is involved in a collision accident that can cause the liquid to ignite. For countries with freezing weather, the use of washer solutions containing methanol may be justified, but in a tropical country like ours, this antifreeze solvent is an unnecessary and unwanted ingredient.

Ordinary soap and water or diluted shampoo used as an alternative windshield washer solution by most Filipino motorists are also not acceptable cleaning agents for the windshield. Unknown to many, ordinary soap usually contains abrasive ingredients that may cause streaks on the windshield—ultimately causing poor visibility or damaging the car's paint. Shampoo, on the other hand, coagulates and clogs the wiper nozzles. Some just resort to using plain water as their washer but without any added lubricant, this can have a potentially abrasive effect on glass when mixed with dust or soil granules.

Considering the many hazards of most imported washer, what then is the safest and clearest way to clean the windshield?

Wash 'n Wype is a revolutionary windshield washer solution that not only has the cutting power to effectively remove the dirt, grime and oil on your car's windshield, but is also specially formulated for the Philippines' tropical weather. It is distributed by Dynamix Enterprises and is now available at all SM Workshops, Ace Hardware outlets, and all Robinson's Handyman branches nationwide.

Ranking cars in quality

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

JAPANESE cars may not have the pizzazz and snob appeal of European cars, but they are superior when it comes to reliability and quality in general. This fact was confirmed anew by the latest J.D. Power and Associates' annual vehicle quality survey released last week in Detroit.

According to J.D. Power, Japanese automakers continue to lead in durability with 228 problems per 100 vehicles for the average Japanese brand, 282 for the average American brand, 331 for European brands and 406 for South Korean brands. The industry average is 273 problems per 100 vehicles.

J. D. Power and Associates, if you don't know it yet, is a highly respected independent organization that conducts automotive quality and customer satisfaction research. Its annual report is watched closely by auto manufacturers who covet even small gains in the rankings since most consumers consider long-term dependability a key factor in choosing which vehicle to buy.

Long-term quality

The latest J. D. Power survey focused on long-term vehicle quality and problems that arise over three years of ownership. J.D. Power asked 55,000 owners of 2000 model vehicles about 147 potential problems with 273 problems per 100 vehicles benchmarked as the industry average. The survey reported that the most common complaint was wind noise, followed by noisy brakes and uneven tire wear.

Toyota's luxury brand Lexus, as in the past several years, topped the survey as Lexus owners reported 163 problems per 100 vehicles. Nissan's luxury brand Infiniti ranked second with 174 problems, General Motors' Buick was third with 179 problems, followed by Porsche AG and Honda's Acura brand. Among manufacturers overall, the top five were Porsche, Toyota, Honda, Nissan and BMW AG.

Among Detroit's Big Three, only GM scored above the industry average with its Buick, Cadillac, GMC, Saturn and Chevrolet marques all performing above average. This was a first for GM and backed GM executives' claims that they are close to matching the quality of Japanese car manufacturers.

Mercedes falls

But more surprising than GM's rise was the fall of Mercedes-Benz. When Daimler-Benz acquired the faltering Chrysler in 1998, everyone expected Mercedes-Benz to show its American unit how to build quality vehicles. However, in last week's J. D. Power survey, it was the other way around. Chrysler, Dodge and the now defunct Plymouth outranked Mercedes, which had 318 problems per 100 vehicles versus 295 for all the Chrysler Group brands.

Joe Ivers, a partner at J.D. Power, said that the most troublesome Mercedes vehicles were its M-Class sport utility vehicle, which has had a lot of problems since its launch, and its E-Class sedans. However, Mercedes managed to edge out Chrysler's Jeep brand in the quality ratings. As Ivers noted, some cars age gracefully and others get disproportionate problems.

Ford did not do well this time around. Although Ford vehicles have been improving consistently since 1997, this year was an exception—perhaps because the survey included the Ford Focus for the first time. The Focus has been plagued with quality problems since its debut in 1999. On the other hand, Lincoln, Ford's premium badge, scored just above Honda, its Mercury brand performed above the industry average and Ford's F-Series pickup topped its class.

Money won or lost

Speaking of Honda, Japan's second largest carmaker has a new president, Takeo Fukui. Formerly the head of Honda's motor sports division, Fukui took charge in June and has been reported as saying that Honda will focus on creating quality cars rather than pursuing quick growth in sales. "I'm not setting sales targets," Fukui told the press. "All that may be convenient for the business, but it's totally irrelevant to the customer."

Fukui obviously knows that long-term quality often means money won or lost for the auto manufacturer. Customers will pay more for both new and used cars with fewer problems. Ivers said Honda's reputation for durability translates into a $1,500 premium in the new-car market and an even larger premium in used vehicles. *(With data from Reuters, The New York Times and Associated Press)*

***

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.

***

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph)

Tricycle, jeep drivers pit skills in Lipa

HUNDREDS of tricycle and jeepney drivers will test their driving skills and traffic discipline this week when the Shell Tricycle and Jeepney King Challenge goes to Lipa City in Batangas.

The competition, slated today and tomorrow at the Fiesta Mall parking lot in Barangay Marawoy, Lipa, is the fourth in the 10-leg Shell event which will culminate in the national finals in December.

Ferdie Vasquez, organizer of the Lipa leg, said he expects some 300 tricycle drivers and 150 jeepney drivers to take a day-off from work to compete in the event.

Said Vasquez: "Lipa drivers are really excited for this event. This event has been a hit for them for the past three years."

Any driver can join with his vehicle. He just have to present a liter of Shell 2T Triple or Advance motorcycle oil (for tricycle) or Shell Rimula diesel oil (for jeepney). The oil will be returned upon registration with a fresh bottle of the same lubricant, a T-shirt and a cap.

Competitors are timed as they negotiate an improvised race track. They are required to follow traffic rules, and they get penalties for every violation. The fastest driver with the least violation wins.

Shell is giving away P5,000, P3,000 and P2,000 for the first, second and third placers in both event. Special prices of P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000 will go to the drivers with the best-dressed tricycle and jeepney.

Yokohama launches new 'AVS decibel' silent tire

YOKOHAMA Tire Sales Philippines Inc. recently launched its newest addition to its AVS (Advanced Vehicle System) product range, the AVS deciBel silent tire for high-grade passenger cars.

Conceived by Yokohama's AVS technology, AVS deciBel tires are touted as the lowest-noise tires offering maximum comfort levels for both driver and passengers. The new AVS dB ensures a quieter ride over the entire service life of the tire, Yokohama sales manager Andrew Bernardo said.

The AVS dB's unique "Decibel" tread pattern with 5-Pitch Variation minimizes hammering noise while the smaller road blocks not only prevent uneven tire wear but also help to reduce tire noise.

The AVS dB's four wide center grooves drain water effectively and greatly reduce the danger of aquaplaning at high speeds.

"AVS," Yokohama's flagship tire series, includes the "AVS Sport" that is used as original equipment on famous sports cars such as the "V12 Vanquish" and "DB7 Vantage" (19-inch option) for the United Kingdom's Aston Martin Lagonda Limited and "Boxster" and "Boxster S" for Germany's Porsche AG.

Yokohama AVS-dB tires are available in 18-inch 40 series, 17-inch 45 and 50 series, 16-inch 50, 55 and 60 series and 15-inch 60 and 65 series.

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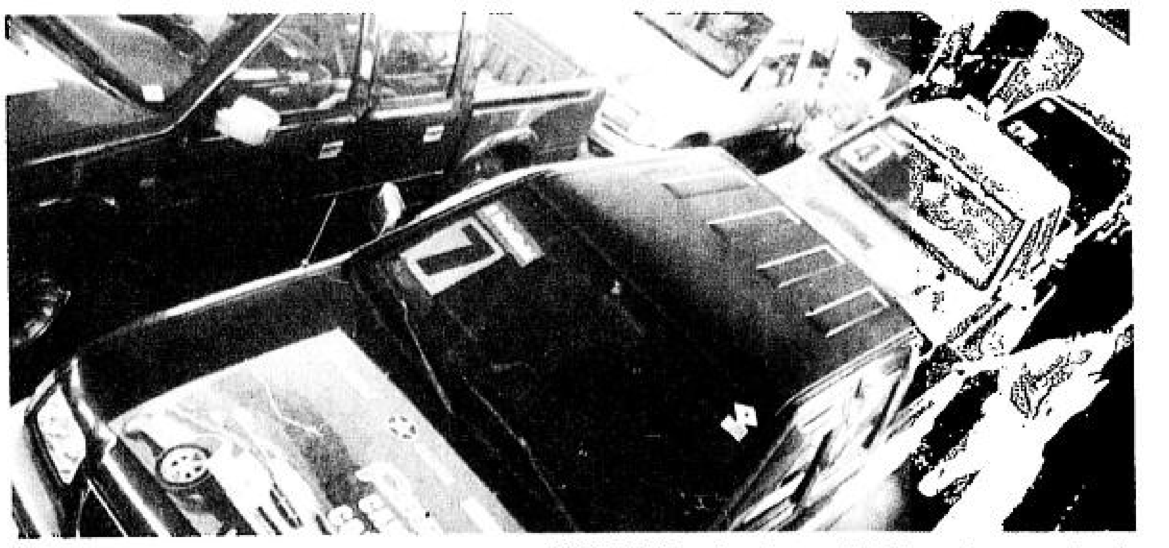
AN EFFICIENT roll-on roll-off system connects Camiguin Island to the rest of Mindanao.



HUDDLED and ready to roll, 17 Isuzu Fuegos patiently waited for the almost-an-hour ride from Balingoan port in Misamis Oriental to the island's Benoni Port.

Fuego gets the attention it rightly deserves

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

LAST month's Isuzu event in the province of Camiguin was likened to a homecoming for its Fuego pickups.

THE ISLAND'S cool climate is attributed to its lush vegetation and pristine surroundings.

The island, situated north of Mindanao, is known for its volcanoes—seven to be exact—which perhaps, what inspired Isuzu to name these pickups.

"Camiguin is a place of contrast: unassuming but has so much to offer, rugged yet majestic—much like the Fuego," said Isuzu Philippines Inc. (IPC) assistant department manager Myrna Gonzales in spearheading the the Isuzu Fuego Conquers Camiquin.

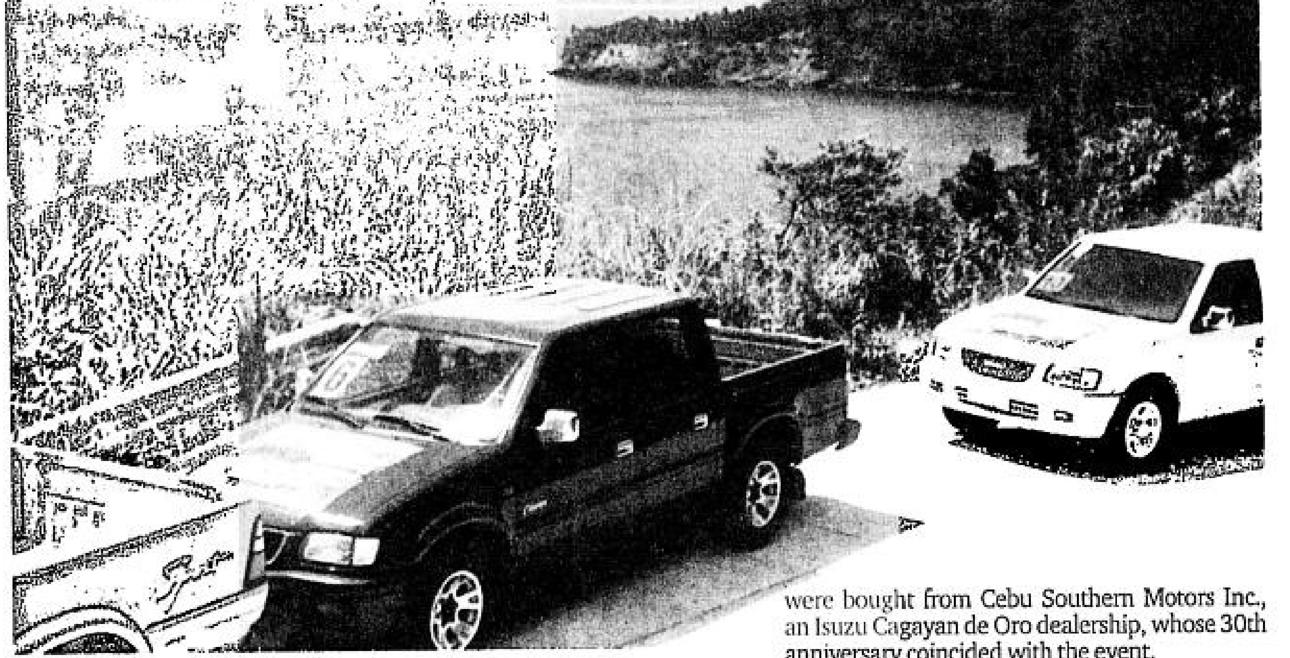
The three-day event is a long expected one for the Fuego, after all the pickup is Isuzu's workhorse vehicle though this fact was seldom highlighted.

Still a favorite

Despite little exposure, the Fuego remains as a favorite choice among entrepreneurs in this part of the country who require tough-performing service vehicles that need less maintenance.

"For several years now, the Fuego has become the pickup of choice here in Mindanao and we are almost certain this part of the country is an Isuzu bailiwick," described Gonzales of northern Mindanao market.

The Fuego Camiguin Conquest was organized to treat its loyal Fuego owners to the island's many attractions: 64-km scenic circumferential coastal roads, invigorating hot springs, cold springs, waterfalls, white beaches, rainforests, craggy mountainsides, and fertile soil that produces one of the country's sweetest Lanzones.



CAMIGUIN'S many scenic spots are easily reached via the island's 64-km circumferential road.

17 Fuegos

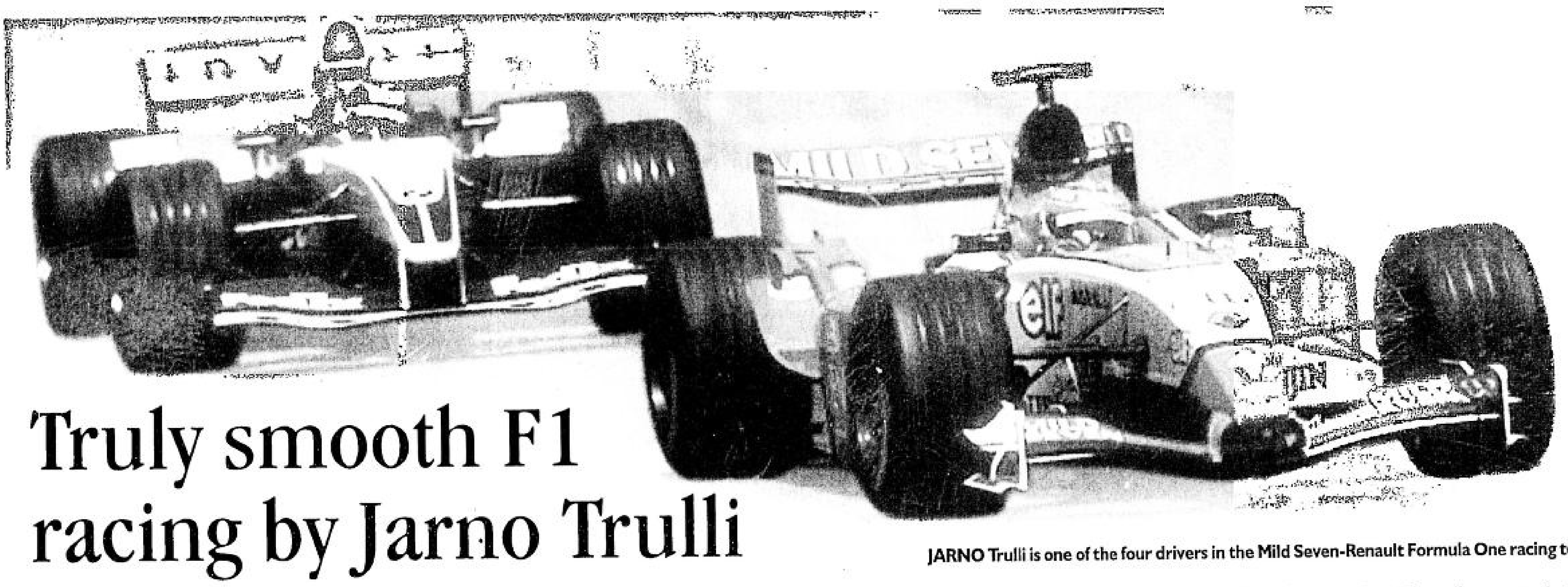
Is was the ultimate exposure for the Fuego as nine owners brought in their pickups and teamed up with the other eight Fuegos alternately driven by motoring media people from Metro Manila.

Participating Fuego owners were from Cagayan de Oro, Ginoog City in Misamis Oriental, Butuan City and Camiguin Island.

All the units driven by Isuzu's loyal owners were bought from Cebu Southern Motors Inc., an Isuzu Cagayan de Oro dealership, whose 30th anniversary coincided with the event.

IPC public relations manager Timmy Naval said Fuego's performance in northern Mindanao remained impressive with Cagayan de Oro alone selling a total of 413 units last year.

"Our success here plus the warm reception of the island to the Fuego might even pave the way to the formation of an exclusive Isuzu Fuego Club," said Naval who added that with such a group, more people would truly feel proud of the workhorse pickup.



JARNO Trulli is one of the four drivers in the Mild Seven-Renault Formula One racing team.

Truly smooth F1 racing by Jarno Trulli

FAST cars, fine wine, football, and fantastic women, too. At first glance, these interests make Jarno Trulli stereotypically Italian. Take note, however, Jarno Trulli is definitely no ordinary Italian.

He makes a living speeding down straight-aways at more than 320 km/h, negotiating the toughest hairpin curves in the world, and enduring gravitational forces of up to 3gs. Welcome to what is just another ordinary working day for a professional Formula One (F1) race car driver.

Reputation

Regarded in racing circles as one of the most naturally talented drivers with a reputation for milking every ounce of speed out of the cars that he drives, Trulli is one of four drivers in the stable of the Mild Seven-Renault Formula One racing team.

That Trulli should make a living out of trying to beat 20 other cars to the finish line should come as no surprise. After all, he began karting in 1983 when he was only nine years old. Over his 13 years in karting (1983-1995), Trulli compiled victories in the Italian, European, and North American circuits which earned him a slot in the karting World Championships in 1991 and 1994. The height of his karting career was when he was crowned world champion in 1994.

In 1995, Trulli raised the Italian Karting Championship trophy for the final time as he moved up to Formula Three racing. Trulli's winning streak continued on the F3 circuit as he finished fourth and eventually bagged the German Formula Three Championship in 1996 and 1997, respectively.

Having proven his mettle in F3, Trulli moved up to Formula One (F1) racing in 1997. Although constantly plagued by car and engine problems, Trulli earned the respect of the F1 community because of his tenacious driving style, always threatening to pass the cars ahead of him. Competing at what is considered the pinnacle of racing, Trulli has never been at a loss for a team. He has driven for reputable F1 teams such as Minardi, Prost, Jordan and currently with the Mild Seven-Renault F1 Team.

With the glitz and glamour plus the hefty paycheck that is part and parcel of being a professional racer, it is easy to understand why Trulli has one very enviable job. But along with this fame and fortune comes responsibility—lots of it.

TRULLI makes a living speeding down straight-aways at more than 320 kph.

Although Trulli had already been well respected as early as when he was finishing at the top of the kart racing roster (before he eventually moved up to be one of top F1 drivers), it is his charitable and amiable disposition that inspires even more admiration.

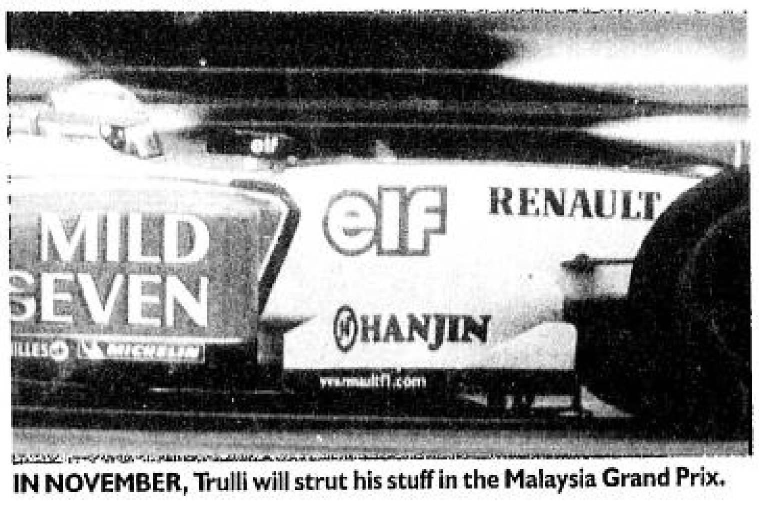
Advocacies

Two of his most notable advocacies are eradicating land mines and caring for less-fortunate children. Such is the mission of the modern professional athlete—to reach out and make a difference both inside and outside their sport.

A constant part of Trulli's schedule includes fund-raising football matches and visiting children. One of these drivers charity football match was held before the Monaco Grand Prix (GP) wherein even world No. 1 driver Michael Schumacher participated.

In yet another driver charity football event prior to the Austrian GP, Trulli, Mild Seven-Renault teammate Fernando Alonso, and other top drivers teamed up to battle an all-star team composed of Australian athletes and celebrities. The sell-out crowd gladly forked out a total of US$100,000 for land-mine victims.

During the last Christmas break in his hometown, Trulli eased his foot off the pedal and worked on a checkered soccer ball for the Marco di Martino charity—named after one of Trulli's childhood friends, Marco di Martino, who died in a vehicular accident a few years ago.



IN NOVEMBER, Trulli will strut his stuff in the Malaysia Grand Prix.

Meet Trulli live

In November, eight lucky Filipinos will have the chance to see and meet Trulli live as he struts his stuff in the Malaysian GP. Mild Seven, one of Trulli's global sponsors, will be giving away eight all-expenses-paid trips to the Sepang Formula One race circuit in Malaysia plus 1,000 Malaysian Ringgit in pocket money as the grand prize for its "F1 Slipstream" raffle promo. Other prizes for the promo are mountain bikes, jackets, backpacks and other premium items will also be given away.

As the premier educators for F1 in the Philippines, Mild Seven has already mounted a string of successful promos carrying F1 racing themes. In 2001, the company mounted the event "Mild Seven F1 SPEEDshow" which introduced local racing aficionados to the R201 race car. Last year, the focal point of the Mild Seven event titled "Mild Seven XLR8: The Mild Seven F1 Experience" was Jenson Button, the first F1 race driver to visit the Philippines and is one of the top 10 race car drivers in the world, and the R202 race car.

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Bayani's not-so-heroic plan; Toyota No. 1 again

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

BAYANI Fernando has not stopped amazing us.

Now he tells us that if traffic does not improve on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City after he has killed the trees there, he will replace the trees "with even bigger trees."

How can that be? How can 30-, 50-year-old, acacia trees be replaced by "bigger trees"? Maybe, Fernando means towering coconut trees or Meralco posts as replacement?

* * *

As usual, Fernando gets it all wrong. It's not the trees. Nor traffic.

First, it's the tender loving care showered by humans upon the trees and the other plants on Katipunan Avenue that's of importance here. The attachment between caregiver and recipient is such that their bonding is beyond time. We commune with nature, not kill nature. Killing is for the merciless, heartless.

Second, it's that worn-out line again being adopted by Fernando: the means justify the end. Very "unheroic," if not barbaric, of Bayani. He will kill to implement a plan. Yet, in the same breath, he tells us that if the plan is a dud, he'll replace the murdered with a new one. It's like saying let's kill a baby because it is an unwanted child. When that solution backfires as a result maybe of the mother's protest, we'll get one from an adoption home as a replacement. If one's not readily available, a Barbie doll will do?

Too cold-bloodied an approach, my cowardly hero. It sucks.

* * *

Toyota has done it again.

The June sales made Toyota's new babe, the Vios, No. 1. Toyota's old reliable, the Revo, also maintained its No. 1 rank (6,631 units sold from January to June) as Asia's giant carmaker asserted its supremacy once more on the local automotive industry.

Campi (Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc.) figures show that Toyota was June's best-selling automotive brand in the country. It garnered a 30-percent market share last month by selling a total of 2,191 vehicles, gaining an increase of 7 percent from sales of the same month last year.

Likewise, Toyota's year-to-date total sales of 13,083 registered a growth of 12 percent from last year's performance, keeping the company on top of market sales.

Here's a glass to Ono-san, Pantaleon-san, Isla-san and De Jesus-san. This quartet takes much of the credit for Toyota's consistent standing as the industry's Mt. Everest.

Kampai!

* * *

Isuzu showed resurgence by placing second behind Toyota after the mid-year sales.

According to Campi, Isuzu sold 1,363 units and captured a market share of 19 percent. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines was third with 1,189 units sold for a 16.5-percent market share.

But on a year-to-date basis, Honda Cars Philippines was second behind Toyota with sales of 7,737 units for a 17 percent share of the market. Mitsubishi was third with sales of 7,620 units for 2003.

* * *

If this were basketball, Toyota has pulled away almost beyond recall. Its new Vios alone has strengthened Toyota's supremacy in the passenger car category by selling 1,029 units last month. That's an impressive 54-percent market share.

On top of that is the Altis' undisputed leadership as the best-selling sedan in the country. The Brad Pitt-endorsed Altis sold 386 units last month, with the Nissan Sentra coming in second with 148 units sold. The Honda Civic was third with 129.

In their head-to-head duel for leadership, Toyota's Vios beat Honda City, 332-213. A close fight, if you ask me.

* * *

But then again, in the overall picture in the passenger car market this year, Toyota kept the lead with a strong 46-percent share, selling 4,268 units for the period.

Honda Cars Philippines was second with 1,487 units sold for a 16-percent market share and Nissan Motor Philippines third with 982 units sold for an 11-percent market share.

Even in the commercial vehicle category, Toyota was tops. Year-to-date sales show Toyota ahead with 8,815 units sold from January to June for a 24-percent market share. Isuzu was second with 21 percent (7,528 units sold) and Mitsubishi third (6,639 units sold) for an 18-percent market share.

With figures like that, the industry is now past the hump?

You bet.

* * *

Headline: Colorum jeepneys will be phased out.

How many times have you seen that headline? Countless.

Not only jeepneys but colorum buses and taxis as well ply in the metropolis in wild abandon daily, contributing to monstrous jams and chaos. Not to mention even tricycles.

If I were Fernando, I'd zero in on these road demons instead of the defenseless trees. He'd gain more supporters than enemies if he did that.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Brake first, whistle a tune next. That's the best way to shoo away anger when you encounter a stupid driver on the road.

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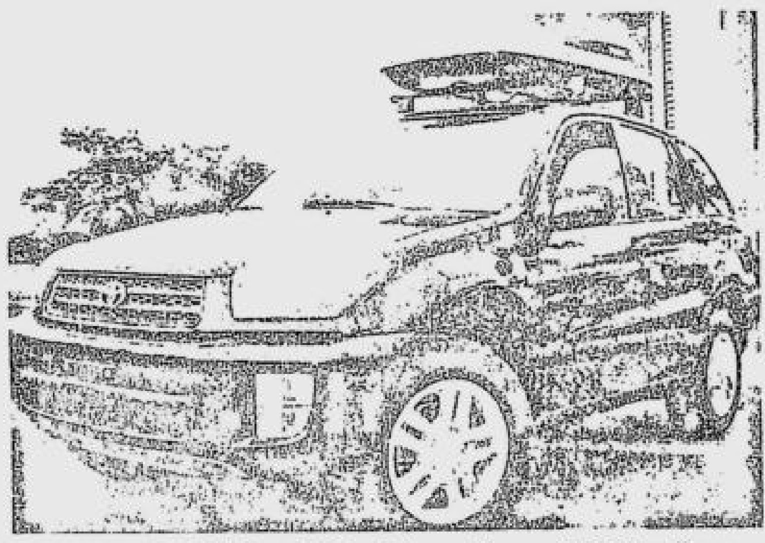

THIS Toyota RAV4 is fitted with a Polar roof box and EGR headlamp visors.

Revving up your RAV

MAXIMIZE your vehicle's load capacity with Thule roof rack system of Sweden and customize its exterior with EGR headlamp visors.

Thule roof rack system is an approved OEM product by Toyota Motor Co. of Japan. It is the only roof rack system sold in the country that conforms with EU standards and is certified by the Ford Q1, QS9000, German DIN 75302 and Environmental Certificate ISO 14001.

For inquiries on how to jazz up your RAV4, visit the Thule/EGR showroom at the Equitable Bank Building, Ortigas Avenue corner Roosevelt Street, Greenhills, San Juan or call 744-6367 for inquiries.

Thule roof racks are also available at Toyota Pasong Tamo, Makati City.

AUTO EXTREME AUTO BYTES

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What is the difference between oversteer and understeer?
—Richard del Rosario from PSi Tech, Taguig

OVERSTEER and understeer are two often misunderstood concepts related to the way a car handles.

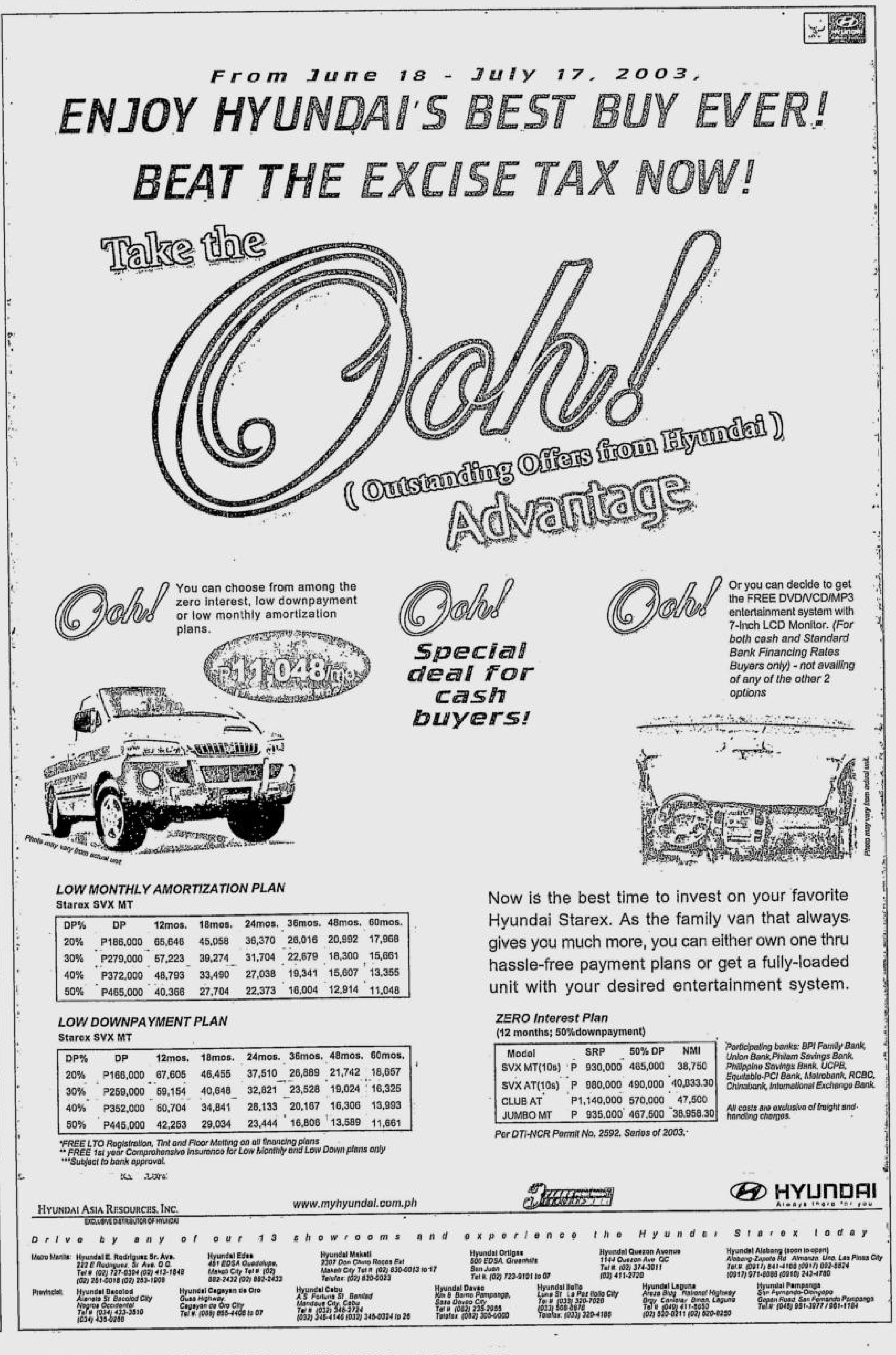
Oversteer is when the rear wheels are carving a larger arc than the front wheels. This happens when the front of the car has more grip than the rear. It creates a feeling that the car is trying to spin.

Some drivers like oversteer in limited amounts because it can make the car feel more responsive, but it carries the risk that the driver will lose control.

Understeer is when the front wheels are carving a larger arc than the rear wheels and the vehicle doesn't turn as quickly as the angle of the front wheels would suggest. This is often described as "push" or "pushing"—as an understeering vehicle wants to point to the outside of a turn, plowing ahead instead of where the wheels are aimed. This happens when the front of the car does not have as much grip as the driver wants. It wears out the front tires and slows the car down.

Most cars come from the factory with a bias toward understeer. That's because it's generally thought that understeer is safer, which is probably true because it is easier for the average driver to cope with understeer than oversteer. If the driver gets uncomfortable and eases off on the gas, that will cause the front end to tighten the curve—a relatively safer, and more predictable condition.

Here's a little trick to help you remember the difference: with Understeer you'll see what you're about to hit in front of you, right under your nose; with Oversteer your tail is going to hit something behind you and over your shoulder.



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40%	P352,000	50,704	34,841	28,133	20,167	16,306	13,993
50%	P445,000	42,253	29,034	23,444	16,806	13,589	11,661

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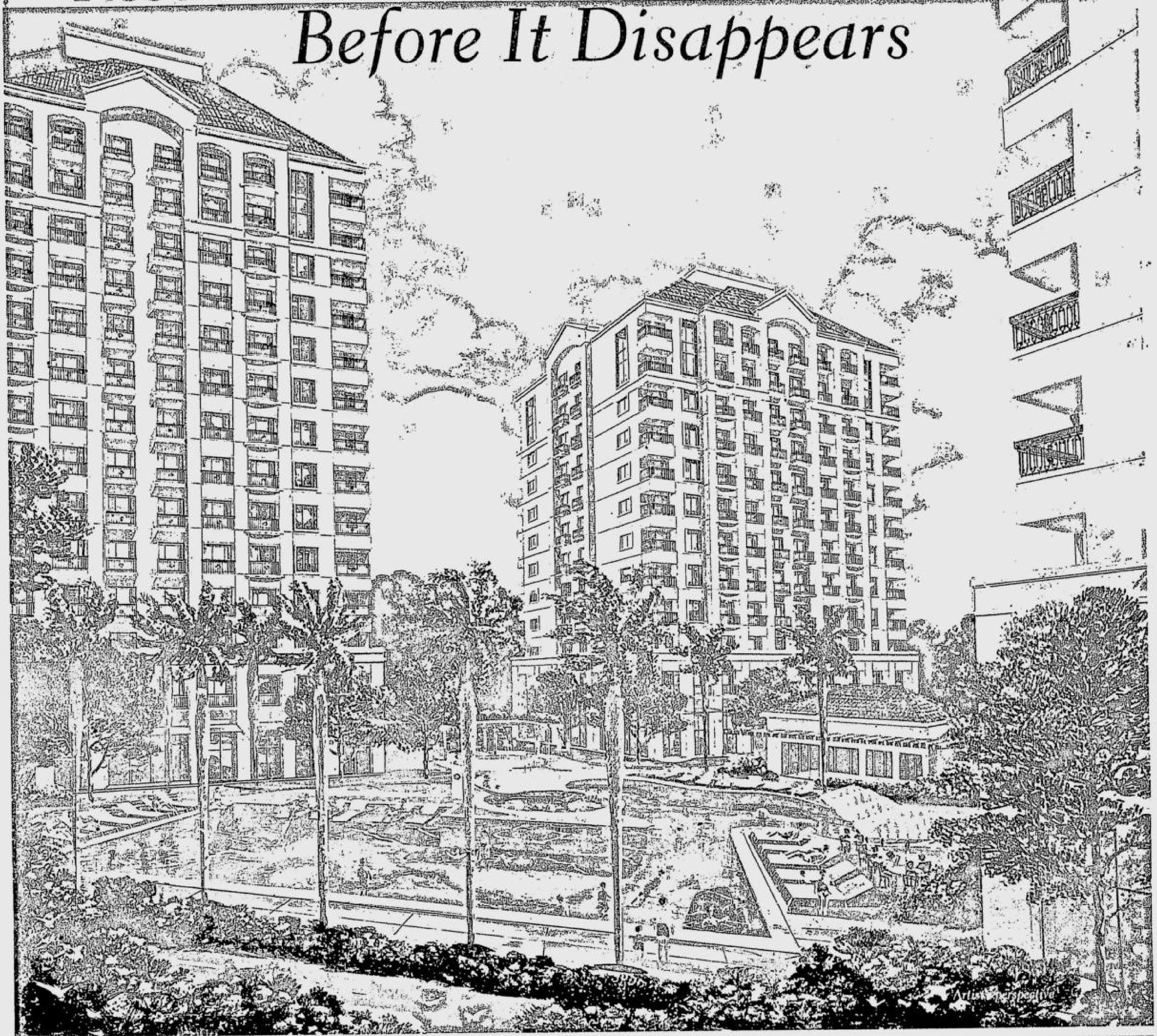
Artist's Perspective

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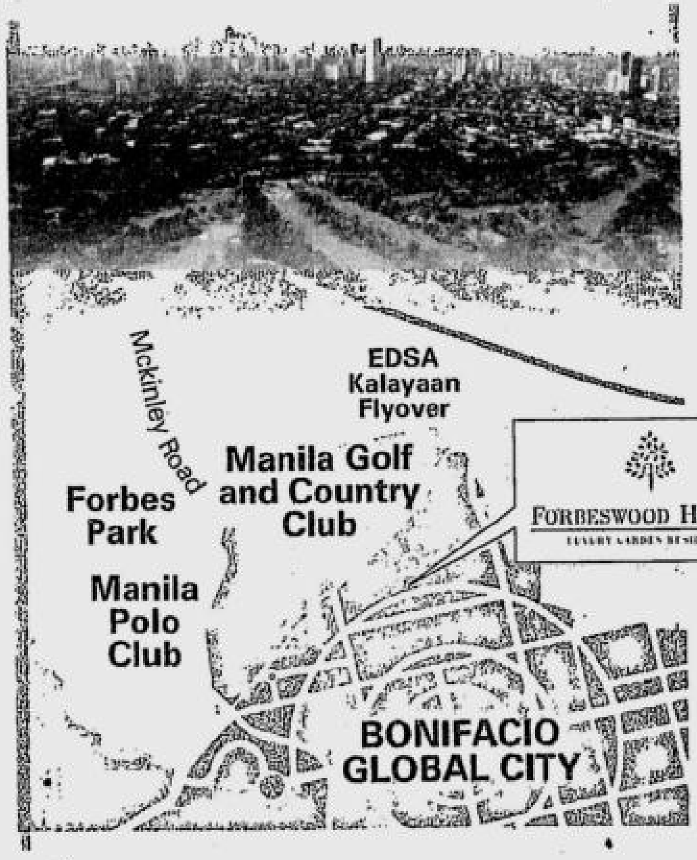
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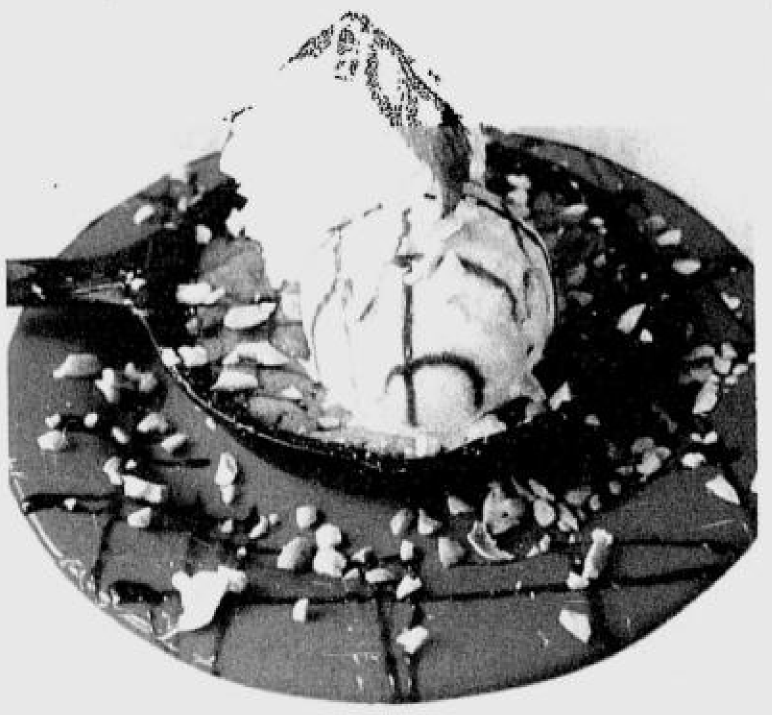
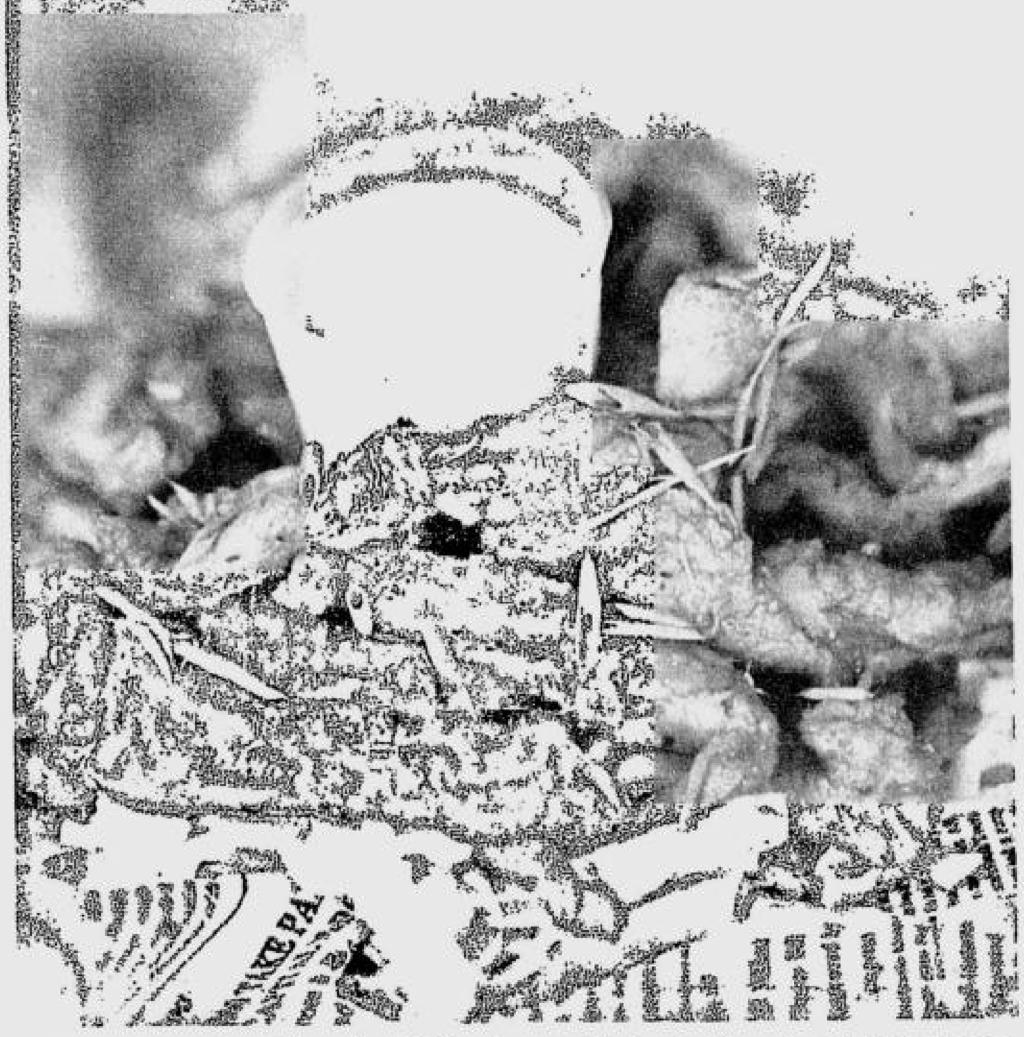
Not just chocolates, but shrimps and fish, too



CHOCOLATE Chip Cookie Sundae, two full scoops of ice cream sitting on a bed of freshly baked hot chocolate chip cookie topped with whipped cream and drizzled with roasted peanuts and a mint sprig



GREENBOW Tenders, Cajun-spiced chicken breast strips toasted to a crisp with blue cheese dipping sauce

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

NOTHING unusual if people stand in line outside a new restaurant. Nothing extraordinary when, a few weeks later, a crowd still lingers around wanting to get in. After all, nothing whets the appetite—and curiosity—like a pack patiently standing in a long queue even when it's way past mealtime, especially if a row of choices is just within spitting distance.

But in a town where new food establishments open and shut down faster than you can swallow your food, it is interesting that after nearly six months in operation, customers of this restaurant still practically come in droves.

"[They say] successful supermodels have that X factor. Maybe there's an X factor in our food, too," says Bayon Alcoseba, Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. Restaurant & Market general manager.

Located at 2/L Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City, Bubba Gump, named after Forrest Gump's "best good friend" in the movie of the same title, has even adjusted its Sunday opening time to accommodate the after-Mass crowd, the so-called first wave. Instead of 11:30, the restaurant now opens at 11 a.m.

"It used to be that people were cranky and irritable when we opened a bit late... *gutom lang pala 'yun*," Alcoseba says. (On busy days, Bubba Gump gets the third, sometimes even fourth, wave as early as 2 p.m.)

The come-on

Alcoseba believes that personalized and friendly service contributes to their success. "We always tell our waiters to be as friendly as possible, although it is also important that they learn how to read the guest first."

For instance, he says, if waiters feel that some guests want to be left alone, then they shouldn't be asked to play the "Forrest Gump" trivia games. Just let them be.

Everything at Bubba Gump follows the United States standard, from façade to food, save for the culture that has to be Filipino. In the US, Alcoseba says, servers come on too strong—hugging guests, performing splits in front of them and more—which are too friendly for the reserved Filipino's comfort.

"A fine line should be drawn. *Hindi pwede dito 'yan*," he says.

Another plus for the restaurant is its music playlist: "I'm a '70s and '80s kind of guy so you hear a lot of music from that period. But if we see a young crowd, we shift to urban and hip-hop music."

As if the movie's constant airplay is not enough, Bubba Gump is now also required to play the movie's theme every 40 minutes. Yes, that poignant piano composition by Alan Silvestri, with the feather/destiny symbolism in the opening and closing credits, will soon be heard in the restaurant.

The negative feedback? Not enough tables for everybody. Seating over 320 guests in a 622-square-meter floor area, Bubba Gump is one of the biggest restos in the building, with areas called Jenny's (balcony), Polo, Frosty, 44, Mama Gump House and Dodge City, each representing a stage in Forrest Gump's life.

"During peak hours, however, so many people want to get in at the same time that some of them have to wait outside."

Size matters

What customers get at Bubba Gump is value for money, says Alcoseba. The servings are huge, good for sharing around, in line with Bubba Gump's philosophy that eating is made more fun when food is shared. The menu features mostly shrimps and seafood dishes, cooked the good old southern American way, although they have a few pasta and meat entrées (one is a 14-oz chop!).

All-time favorite appetizers include Popcorn Shrimp, deep-fried shrimps coated with Dixie Fry flour with remoulade sauce. For that spicy treat, there's Greenbow Tenders, Cajun-spiced chicken breast strips toasted to a crisp with blue cheese dipping sauce.

With about 100 orders per day, the bestseller is Bubba's After the Storm Bucket of Boat Trash, a humongous serving of shrimp, slipper lobster and white fish cooked Baja-

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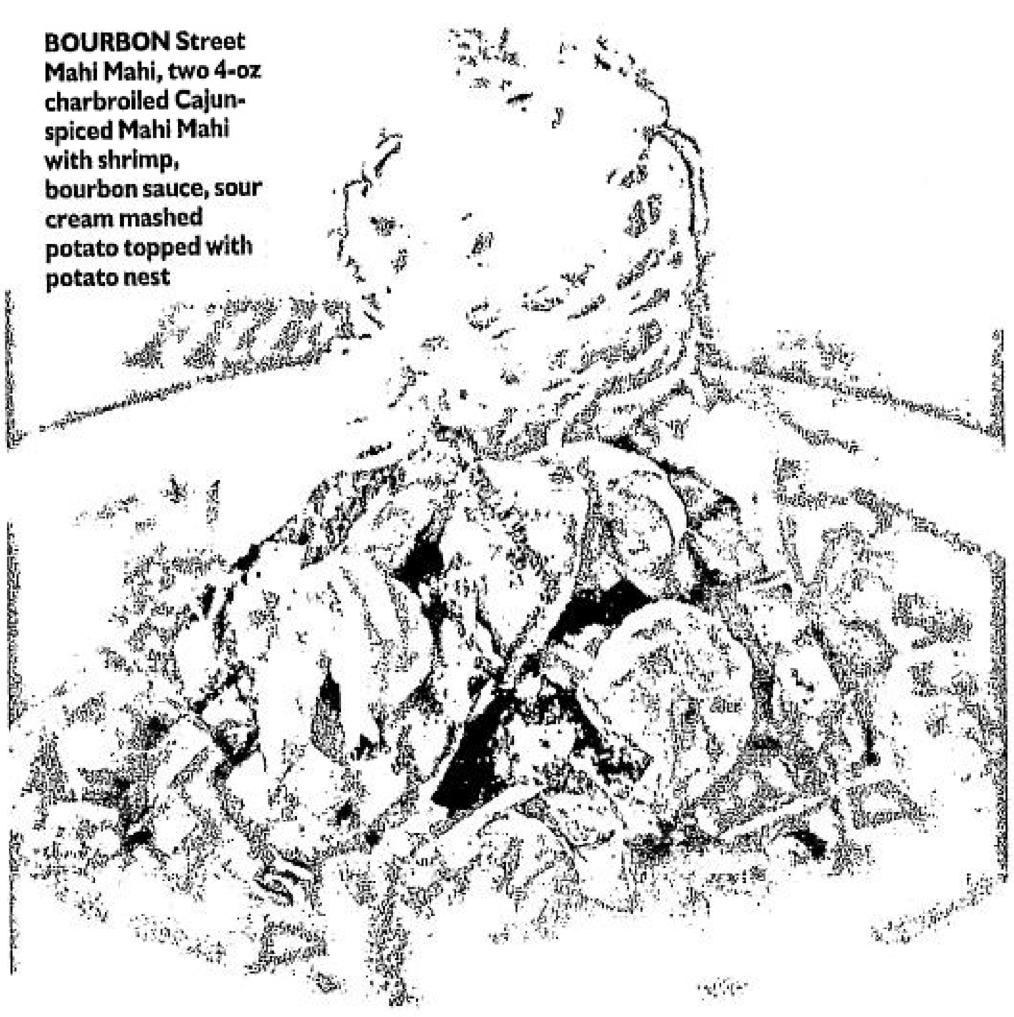
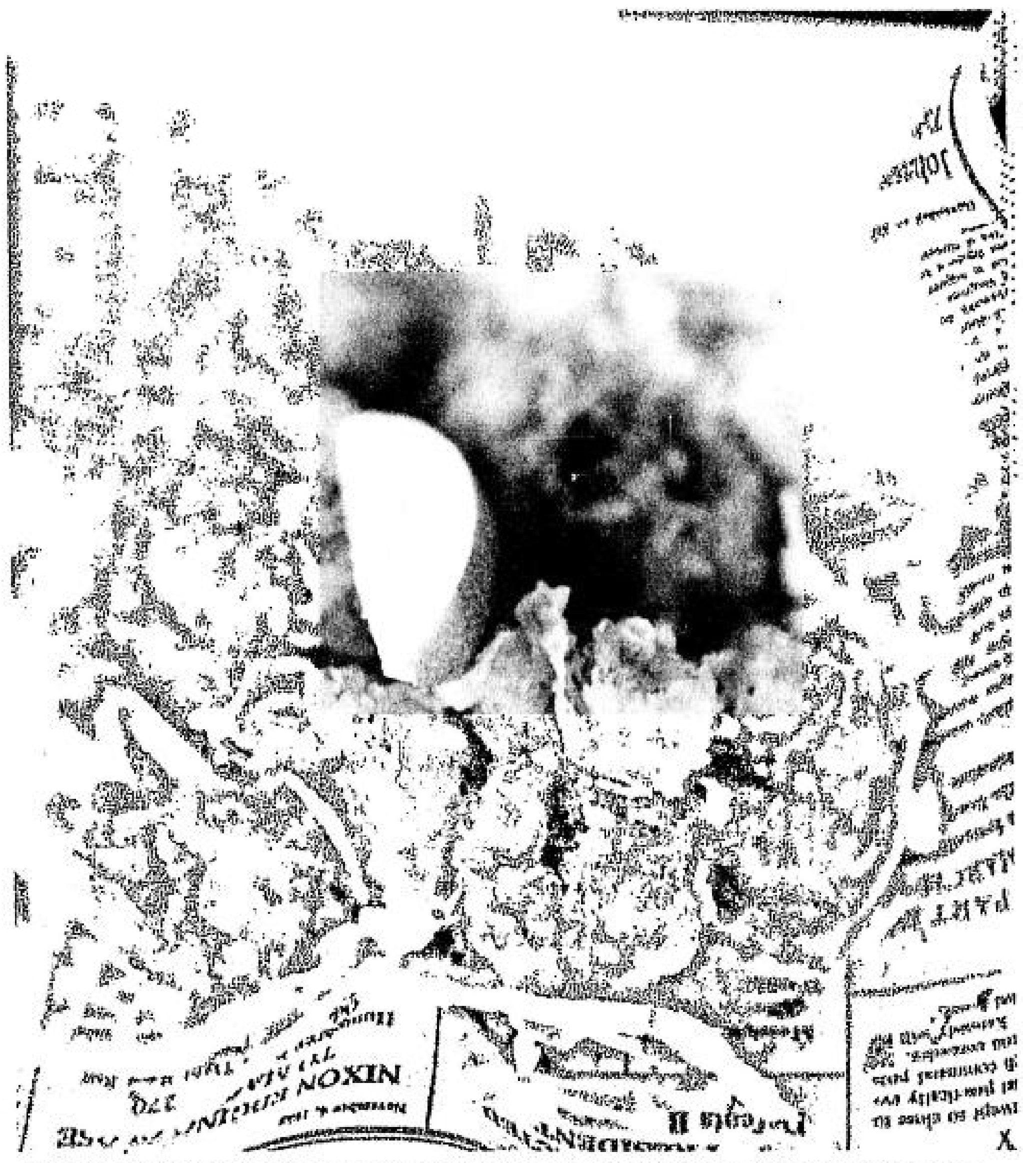


BOURBON Street Mahi Mahi, two 4-oz charbroiled Cajun-spiced Mahi Mahi with shrimp, bourbon sauce, sour cream mashed potato topped with potato nest

Bubba Gump is named after Forrest Gump's 'best good friend' in the movie of the same title



POPCORN Shrimp, deep-fried shrimps coated with Dixie Fry flour, with remoulade sauce

Not just chocolates, but shrimps and fish, too

From page C1

style and served with coleslaw and fries.

Another bestseller is Bourbon Street Mahi Mahi, two 4-oz charbroiled Cajun-spiced Mahi Mahi (a fish) with bourbon sauce and shrimp, sour cream mashed potato topped with potato nest.

Desserts galore

Desserts at Bubba Gump are like no other—an irresistibly wicked indulgence of scandalous proportions, literally a certified diabetic's nightmare on a platter. The front-runner is the famous Alabama Mud Pie, thick layers of chocolate and vanilla ice cream with crumbled Snickers chocolate and caramel in between, topped ,with Hershey's chocolate syrup, whipped cream and peanuts.

The Chocolate Chip Cookie Sundae consists of two full scoops of ice cream sitting on a bed of freshly baked hot chocolate chip cookie topped with whipped cream and drizzled with roasted peanuts garnished with a mint sprig.

The bestseller drink, with 200 orders per day, is the Speckled Lemonade with strawberries in suspended animation—tucked between layers of ice for a surreal visual effect. There are also rich servings of smoothies with soft-serve ice creams. They can be made alcoholic with a dash of rhum or vodka.

And then there's the Pink or Blue Frozen Lemon-Up popular with the kids. Add citrus rum and it becomes Bubba Blue Slush or Jenny's Pink Slush. "If the cherry has no bow, then it's the alcoholic version of the drink," Alcoseba says.

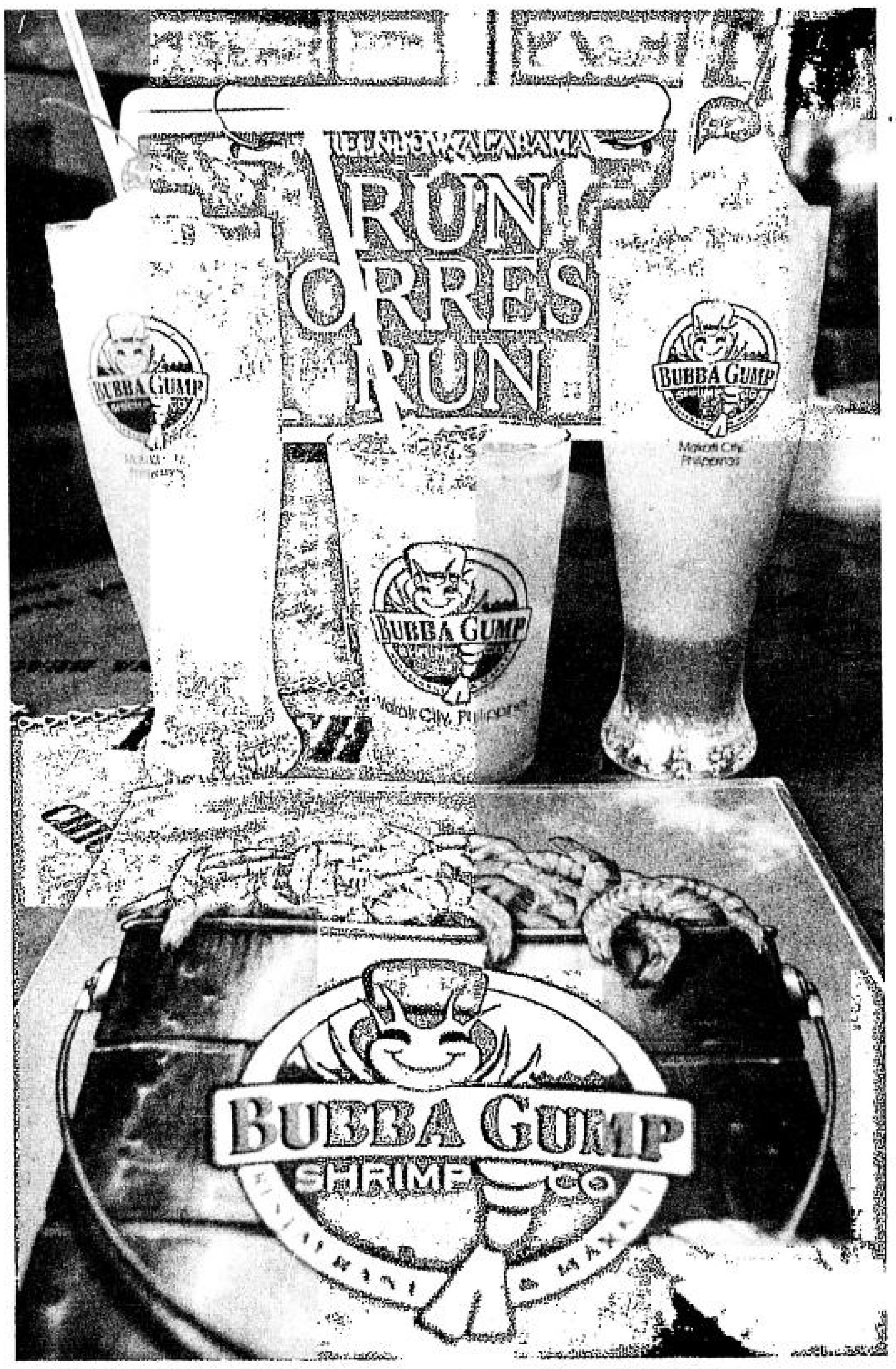
The bar list includes cocktail drinks and bottled beers. Alabama Sunrise, Bubba's version of Bloody Mary, is garnished with celery, lemon pepperoncini and—surprise!—shrimp. Lava Flow, their own piña colada, has strawberry swirl.

Bubba novelty items are also available, such as tall bubble glasses, T-shirts, baseball caps, pins and more.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

THE RECEPTION AREA. Get a dose of Forrest Gump wisdom while waiting to be seated.

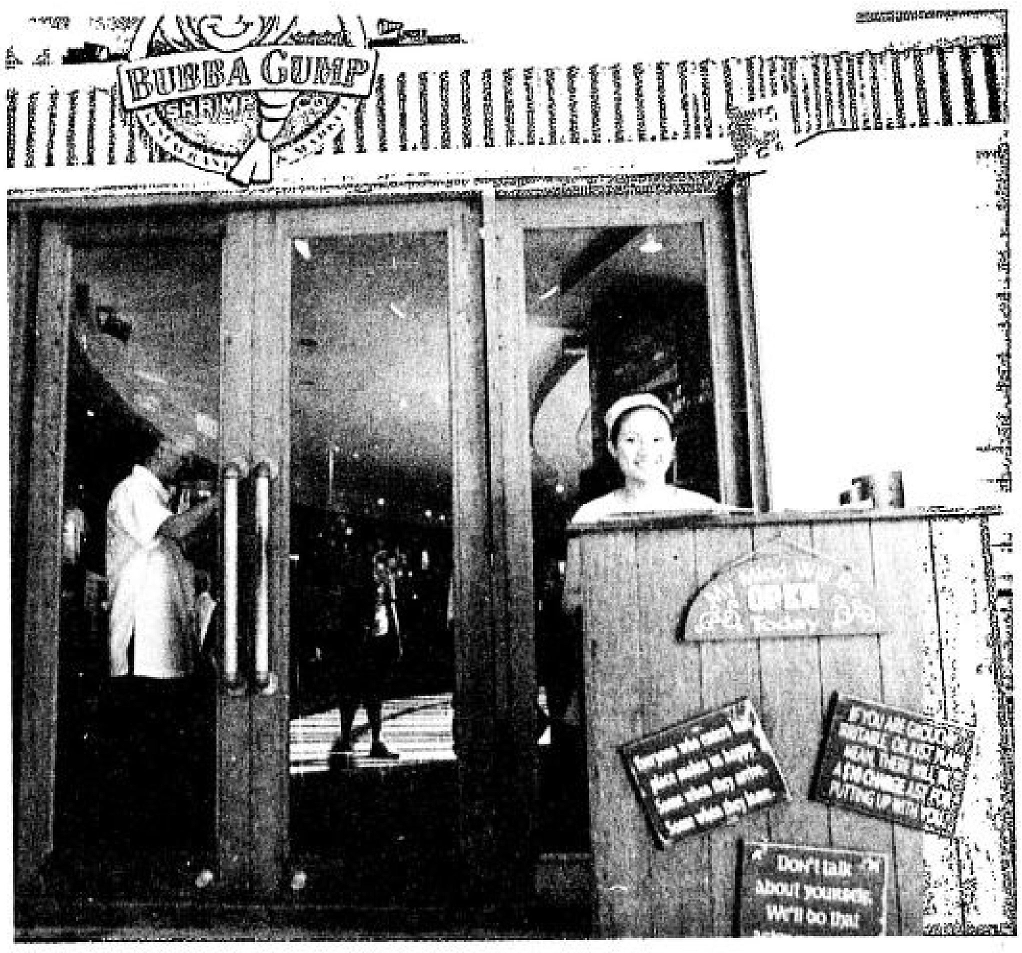
THE DINING area is a reflection of the Bubba Gump culture—laidback, friendly and unpretentious.



BESTSELLING drinks: Pink/Blue Frozen Lemon-Ups and Speckled Lemonade

STOP FORREST STOP

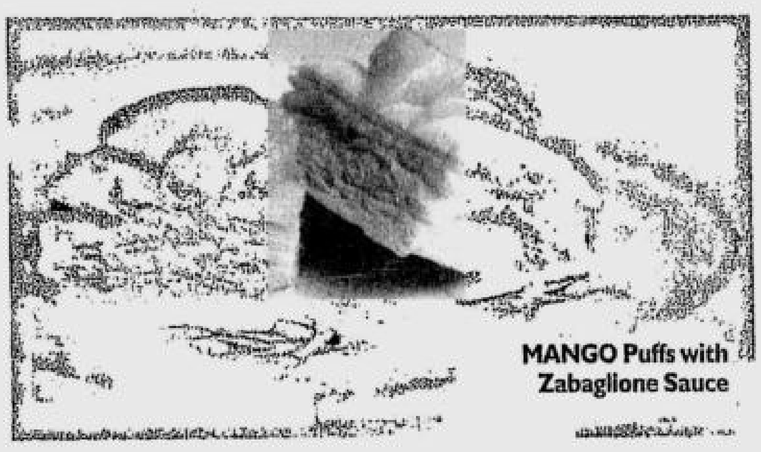
THE BUBBA FAMILY. Seated: assistant kitchen manager Alex Dacasin and Bubba host Nathaniel Calinawan; Standing, from left: market manager Bing Judan, bar manager Gio Gillego, general manager Bayon Alcoseba and kitchen manager Nick Santiago



STEP into Bubba Gump's world and discover that life, indeed, is more than just a box of chocolates.

STUFFED Herb Eggplant Chicken with Chunky Tomato Relish paired with Jacob's Creek Chardonnay 2001

EDNA Diaz, Best World Beverage Brands GM, distributor of Jacob's Creek; Bryan Fry, viticulturalist and Jacob's Creek regional manager for Asia Pacific; and Salvador "Bambit" Bonoan, Pernod Ricard country manager



MANGO Puffs with Zabaglione Sauce

Aussie approach to wine

"BIG Australian taste—clean, crisp, easy to drink, relaxed and highly enjoyable." That's how Bryan Fry, Jacob's Creek viticulturalist (wine scientist), described the Creek's range of wines.

Jacob's Creek hosted a Food and Wine Match lunch for selected restaurateurs and journalists at the Absinth restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati City, recently.

Indeed, Jacob's Creek was a joy to drink. The sessions made guests appreciate the matching of Jacob's Creek Riesling 2001 with the Absinth Bistro Salad, Jacob's Creek Merlot 2001 with Shredded Pork Adobo plus Kesong Puti on Crostini, Jacob's Creek Chardonnay 2001 with Stuffed Herb Eggplant Chicken plus chunky tomato relish, and Jacob's Creek Shiraz Cabernet with Asian Beef Vermicelli.

"Enjoying wine is mostly a matter of personal taste," said Bryan, "and we at Jacob's Creek encourage people to sensitize themselves to what they like—matching the taste and texture of food with the equivalent wine that enhances the meal."

Said Bambit Bonoan, newly-appointed country manager of Pernod Ricard: "Jacob's Creek is that rare wine brand that has both so-called wine experts and simple wine drinkers nodding their heads in appreciation."

Jacob's Creek won 289 awards in 2002. It is Australia's top export wine and Asia's best-selling wine. It is No. 1 in the UK, and is the fastest-growing brand in the USA. Indeed, one can't go wrong with it.

"People have begun to notice Jacob's Creek in the Philippines as a quality wine they like and trust," said Edna Diaz, GM of Best World Beverages, distributor of Jacob's Creek in Manila.

Popular Chinese resto now in Alabang

SUPER Bowl of China has opened its latest branch on the 3/L Chefs Avenue in Festival Supermall, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang.

Patrons from Parañaque, Las Piñas, Alabang and nearby areas can now enjoy the same good food and generous servings at reasonable prices that other Super Bowl branches in SM Megamall, Jupiter Street and Glorietta 4, Makati, are offering satisfied diners.

There are over 100 dishes on Super Bowl's menu. You can begin with *sio mai*, chicken feet, *hakao*, dumpling, wanton and spring roll, or to taste an assortment of dimsum, the Combination Platter.

There's also roast kitchen, pig suckling, barbecue *asado*, roasted duck and more, all present in the Big Buddha platter.

Specialties of the house include Crispy Lemon Chicken, Super Bowl Pork Chop, Szechuan Shrimp, Sweet and Sour Pork, Beef Fillet Chinese Style, Lapu-lapu Fillet with Taosi Sauce and Crispy Noodle with Assorted Seafood.

Also recommended are new additions like the Chicken or Pork in Haw Flakes Sauce, Sliced Beef with Broccoli, Steamed Fish with Garlic, and Sauteed Fresh Szechuan Scallops.

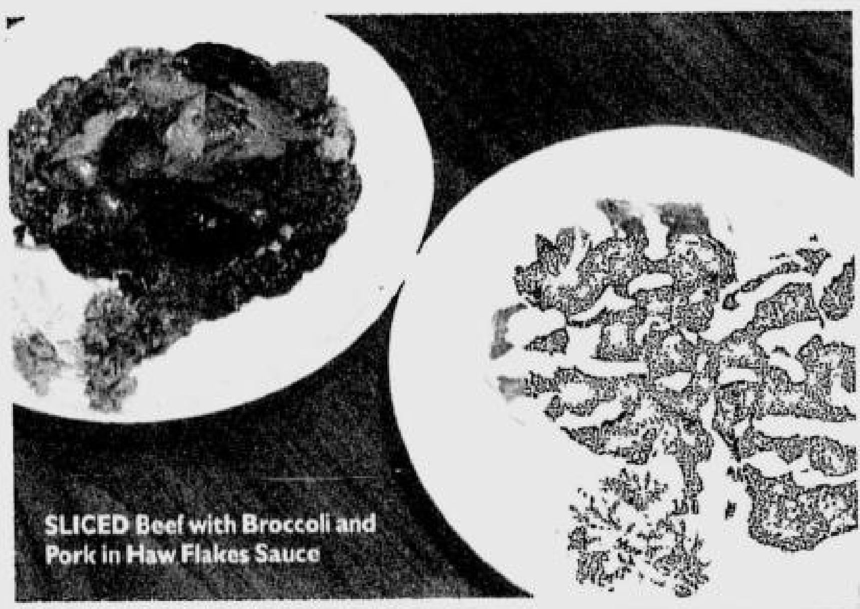
To end your meal, top-seller desserts like the Peanut Buchi, Mango Pudding and Deep Fried Sesame Balls are available.

The 150-seater restaurant in Alabang also has a dining area outside (along Chefs Avenue) for those who want to eat and people-watch.

A function room that can accommodate 20 persons can be booked for meetings and private get-togethers. Call Super Bowl Alabang at 809-8968.

All dishes come in microwaveable food packages that can also be dipped in hot water for quick heating. Delivery is from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. for a minimum order of P250. A 10 percent delivery charge will be added to the final bill. Call 737-8888.

The covered areas for deliveries include Quezon City, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Pasay, Makati, Pasig, San Juan, Alabang, Parañaque and Las Piñas.



SLICED Beef with Broccoli and Pork in Haw Flakes Sauce

AT THE SUPER Bowl of China Festival Supermall Alabang opening are Ben Loo, Martin Carrion, Timmy Sy, chef Law Hung Sau and Richie Yang.

Culinary classes at the mall

THE REGGIE Aspiras School of Culinary Arts on the 3/F Bon Appetit, Shangri-La Edsa, Mandaluyong, announces its schedule of cooking classes.

July 21—Cocktails, Dips and Spreads: Sundried Tomato, Crab and Brie, Marinated Goat cheese, Rilletes of Duck with Peppercorns, Ricotta and Spinach, Pine Nut and Feta, Green Olive dip, Crudites, Toasts and Crisps

July 23, Fresh Catch (morning class): Baked Norwegian Salmon with Mango Dill Sauce, Grilled Chilean Sea Bass with Lemon Jam, Caramelized Salmon with Cream Sauce, Sole with Two Sauce Caper Tomato sauce and Anchovy Butter, Sea Bass with Wild Mushroom, side dishes; Risotto (afternoon): Arugula Duck with Mango Risotto, Saffron Risotto with Grilled Shrimp, Shallot Roast Chicken with Wild Rice and Roasted Shallot Risotto, Lamb Shanks with Sweet Potato Risotto, Ox-tail Stew with Caramelized Garlic Risotto.

July 25—Paella Filipina: Taba ng Talangka Paella with Mixed Seafood and Vegetables, Paksiw na Lechon Paella with Stewed Banana Blossoms and Lakatan Relish, Bistek Tagalog Paella with Caramelized Shallots and Lemon Soy Dressing, Capsicum Afritada with Saffron Paella, Arroz a la Cubana Paella with Taro and Banana Chips

Monday and Friday classes start at 9 a.m.; Wednesdays at 9 a.m.-12 nn (morning class) and 1:30-4:30 p.m. (afternoon class)

Call 928-9296, 927-3008 or 633-5162 for reservations.

US beef and wine fest at mall

ENJOY the special beef dish creations of the chefs at California Pizza Kitchen, Steak Town Boston Charcoal Grill, Trattoria Gourmet, Gloria Maris, Struan & Tang's Tea Salon and Café Provencal in celebration of "Hello, America," a month-long American celebration at Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

Trattoria Gourmet's offerings include Beef Tenderloin Mignon in Mushroom Sauce, Rib Eye Steak in Butter, Olive Oil in Garlic Sauce, Saltimbocca alla Ramona Beef Scallopine in a Sage Butter White Wine Sauce and Beef Stroganoff in Tomato and Sour Cream Sauce.

On Café Provencal's menu are Grilled Barbecue Flank Sandwich with sautéed onions, tomatoes and lettuce; Brisket "Pot au Feu" with boiled potatoes and Dijon mustard; US Rib Eye Steak on peppery potatoes, shoestring onions served with Maitre D' Butter; and Braised Beef Provencal, tender cuts of braised beef in red wine gravy with vegetables and herbs served with Penne Alio Olio.

Diners at Gloria Maris will be treated to US beef tenderloin Chinese style, Beef Tausi with Ampalaya, Sauteed Beef with Seasoned Vegetables in Oyster Sauce, and Beef Brisket with Radish in Hot Pot.

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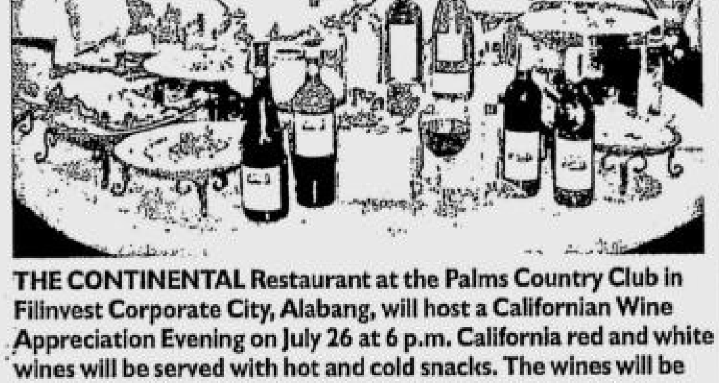
Shang's US beef and wine fest runs until Aug. 15. Call 633-7851.



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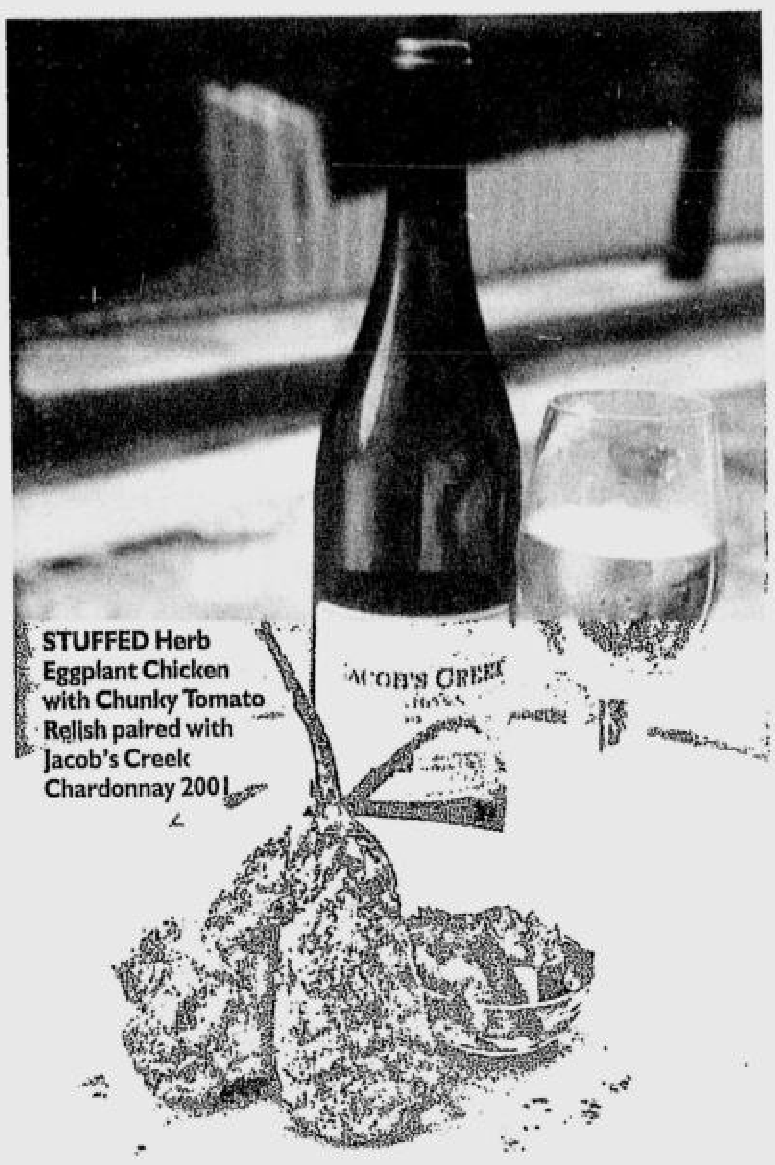


STUFFED Herb Eggplant Chicken with Chunky Tomato Relish paired with Jacob's Creek Chardonnay 2001

EDNA Diaz, Best World Beverage Brands GM, distributor of Jacob's Creek; Bryan Fry, viticulturalist and Jacob's Creek regional manager for Asia Pacific; and Salvador "Bambit" Bonoan, Pernod Ricard country manager

MANGO Puffs with Zabaglione Sauce

Aussie approach to wine

"BIG Australian taste—clean, crisp, easy to drink, relaxed and highly enjoyable." That's how Bryan Fry, Jacob's Creek viticulturalist (wine scientist), described the Creek's range of wines.

Jacob's Creek hosted a Food and Wine Match lunch for selected restaurateurs and journalists at the Absinth restaurant in Greenbelt, Makati City, recently.

Indeed, Jacob's Creek was a joy to drink. The sessions made guests appreciate the matching of Jacob's Creek Riesling 2001 with the Absinth Bistro Salad, Jacob's Creek Merlot 2001 with Shredded Pork Adobo plus Kesong Puti on Crostini, Jacob's Creek Chardonnay 2001 with Stuffed Herb Eggplant Chicken plus chunky tomato relish, and Jacob's Creek Shiraz Cabernet with Asian Beef Vermicelli.

"Enjoying wine is mostly a matter of personal taste," said Bryan, "and we at Jacob's Creek encourage people to sensitize themselves to what they like—matching the taste and texture of food with the equivalent wine that enhances the meal."

Said Bambit Bonoan, newly-appointed country manager of Pernod Ricard: "Jacob's Creek is that rare wine brand that has both so-called wine experts and simple wine drinkers nodding their heads in appreciation."

Jacob's Creek won 289 awards in 2002. It is Australia's top export wine and Asia's best-selling wine. It is No. 1 in the UK, and is the fastest-growing brand in the USA. Indeed, one can't go wrong with it.

"People have begun to notice Jacob's Creek in the Philippines as a quality wine they like and trust," said Edna Diaz, GM of Best World Beverages, distributor of Jacob's Creek in Manila.

Popular Chinese resto now in Alabang

SUPER Bowl of China has opened its latest branch on the 3/L Chefs Avenue in Festival Supermall, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang.

Patrons from Parañaque, Las Piñas, Alabang and nearby areas can now enjoy the same good food and generous servings at reasonable prices that other Super Bowl branches in SM Megamall, Jupiter Street and Glorietta 4, Makati, are offering satisfied diners.

There are over 100 dishes on Super Bowl's menu. You can begin with *sio mai*, chicken feet, *hakao*, dumpling, wanton and spring roll, or to taste an assortment of dimsum, the Combination Platter.

There's also roast kitchen, pig suckling, barbecue *asado*, roasted duck and more, all present in the Big Buddha platter.

Specialties of the house include Crispy Lemon Chicken, Super Bowl Pork Chop, Szechuan Shrimp, Sweet and Sour Pork, Beef Fillet Chinese Style, Lapu-lapu Fillet with Taosi Sauce and Crispy Noodle with Assorted Seafood.

Also recommended are new additions like the Chicken or Pork in Haw Flakes Sauce, Sliced Beef with Broccoli, Steamed Fish with Garlic, and Sauteed Fresh Szechuan Scallops.

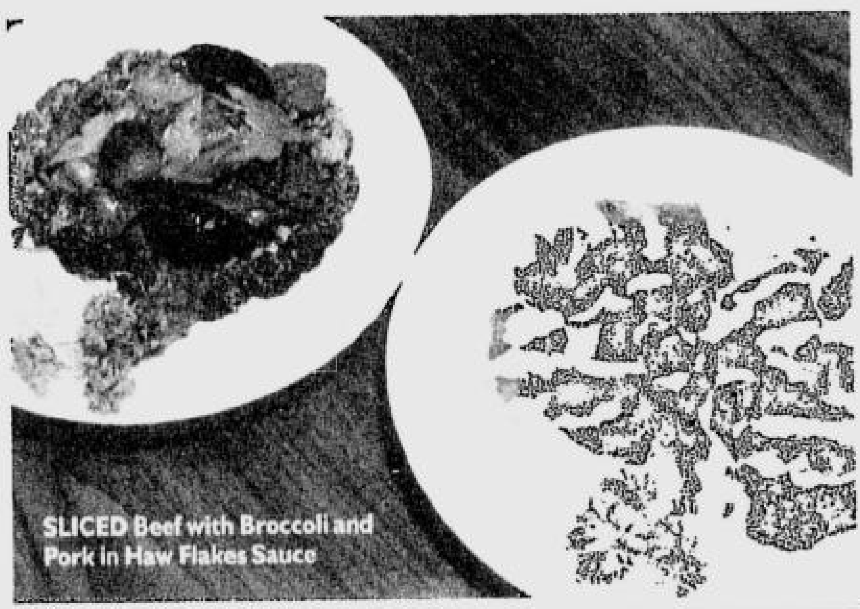
To end your meal, top-seller desserts like the Peanut Buchi, Mango Pudding and Deep Fried Sesame Balls are available.

The 150-seater restaurant in Alabang also has a dining area outside (along Chefs Avenue) for those who want to eat and people-watch.

A function room that can accommodate 20 persons can be booked for meetings and private get-togethers. Call Super Bowl Alabang at 809-8968.

All dishes come in microwaveable food packages that can also be dipped in hot water for quick heating. Delivery is from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. for a minimum order of P250. A 10 percent delivery charge will be added to the final bill. Call 737-8888.

The covered areas for deliveries include Quezon City, San Juan, Mandaluyong, Pasay, Makati, Pasig, San Juan, Alabang, Parañaque and Las Piñas.



SLICED Beef with Broccoli and Pork in Haw Flakes Sauce

AT THE SUPER Bowl of China Festival Supermall Alabang opening are Ben Loo, Martin Carrion, Timmy Sy, chef Law Hung Sau and Richie Yang.

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Concoctions that offer relief from the weather

THE JOYFUL COOK

Felice Prudente Sta. Maria

Steaming sour soups, like 'sinigang,' reportedly help people cool off by causing them to perspire

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

THE JOYFUL Cook was mixing a teaspoon of organic cider vinegar in a glass of water at room temperature, as she always did to start her mornings. "I can never seem to get this right," she muttered to St. Sandok, the antique cooking spoon she inherited from Lola Uning. "It's either too sour or too faint. But I use the same teaspoon every day to measure."

"Maybe it's your tastebuds. Some days you taste the sourness more than others," he ventured. "Or maybe it's how the liquid rolls down your tongue and touches the different parts assigned to taste a specific flavor."

"I don't know. Drinking at least three glasses of water, followed by one with a little cider vinegar, seems to be helping my complexion, general feeling of health, and how I feel about the crazy climate. I think nature is caught between El Niño and La Niña again. It's either too hot, too humid, or too wet. And yet this is supposed to be rainy season already," TJC noted.

"The Spanish used to shake their heads and exclaim, 'The Philippines has six months of dust, six months of mud, six months of everything!' During the Philippine Revolution against a monarchial system of governance, the King's soldiers who came from the peninsula branded our weather more 'insane' than America's. The troops were acclimatized for three months in Andalusia, Badjoz, Levant or the Canary Islands before being shipped off to Cuba or the Philippines," Sandok remembered.

Heat relief

"Lemonade water with vinegar or rum—2 spoonfuls of either to 1 liter of water—was said to counter the tropical sun's debilitating effects as well as scurvy. In 1897, *'Salud del Europeo en America y Filipinas'* was published. It advised taking a tisane of coffee with sugar every two hours as the best way of strengthening muscles, reducing sweat, aiding digestion, preventing stomach ailments and coping with the heat," TJC said.

"I wonder what today's nutritionists and biochemists will say about old remedies like that one. Imagine making the book's recipe for Coffee Liqueur as regular refreshment: 'Place 2 spoonfuls of macerated, toasted and ground coffee into half a liter of superior alcohol. After 13 days, strain the liquid then mix the filtered concentrate with syrup (made by dissolving 300 grams of white sugar in a liter of water over a flame). Filter again and bottle. To use, simply dissolve a medium spoonful of the liqueur in a glass of water for an agreeable beverage; but avoid abuse,' it says."

"I wonder how many alcoholics were made?" said Sandok with a chuckle.

"I prefer to counter the heat with *kamias* juice. The fruit is a natural refrigerant. I just freeze some washed fruit in case the tree is bare when someone has a fever during the rains. Or now, with the help of my blender, I make a puree of fruit, strain it and freeze the sour concentrate in plastic containers, with one container having exactly what I need for a liter of juice. Once the fruit or the concentrate thaws, I add honey or brown-sugar syrup and water. It's also nice with fizzy soda or tonic water," TJC recounted. "I've read that sour soups like *sinigang* are favored by people living in hot climes. The sourness plus the heat of steaming *sinigang* make one perspire and thus cool down."

"That's what elders used to say. There is definitely some truth to the belief that perspiring is one way to release heat from the body. What's nice with sour soups is that one can control the acidity. I know your Lola Uning didn't like very sour soups, not even very sour vinegars. She not only employed *kamias* for *sinigang* but other fruits such as tart *katmon* and *balimbing* as well as unripe tamarind, pineapple, *santol*, guava and banana. Each fruit gave a distinct savor to *sinigang*.

"Unripe *lakatan* banana was particularly favored for chicken *sinigang*. Nowadays some cooks resort to bottled vinegar as souring agent," he added.

"Antipolo used to be known for *sinigang* soured with *alibangbang* leaves. But I don't see any white bauhinia trees anymore. The barangays there ought to start planting them and reviving the popularity of the dish that was once synonymous with their identity. Maytime before was incomplete without a Marian pilgrimage and Antipolo *sinigang*, my elderly aunts still say," said TJC.

"The classic 'Book of Household Management' edited by Isabel Beeton in 1861 notes that Spanish peasants and other inhabitants of southern Europe ate bread while drinking a mixture of one gallon of water, one gill of wine vinegar and a little salt in order to sustain themselves in sunny, hot fields. Even in the Bible, Ruth describes a similar practice," she added. "Ms Beeton includes 'A Pleasant Drink of Warm Weather' that is 1-1/2 pints good ale—a light beer I guess can be substituted—mixed with 1 bottle of ginger beer or what we find in supermarkets and health shops here as ginger ale."

Cough relief

"The switch from dry to wet and cool to hot these days is bound to cause people to catch a cold," TJC continued. "In 1911, public schools in the Philippines taught that catching a cold was a serious matter because it could be the beginning of tuberculosis. Girls were taught to stay dry and, if caught in a rain on the way home from school, to immediately remove wet clothing, dry with a rough towel till it felt warm, then put on dry clothing and stay out of the rain. Hot *kalamansi* juice or ginger tea was recommended, along with hot baths and mustard foot baths to stem a cold.

"Cold prevention was taken seriously then. School recommended preventive measures rather than taking a pill. A textbook from 1922 offers a recipe for *Salabat*: Pare and bruise 1 piece of ginger that is 3 cm. long; add 4 cups cold water and 4 tablespoons brown sugar; bring mixture to a boil, strain and serve hot," she remembered.

"It's healthy when the public school system takes what's effective from tradition and helps pass it on," St. Sandok commented, trying to hide the itch in his throat and the cough coming on....

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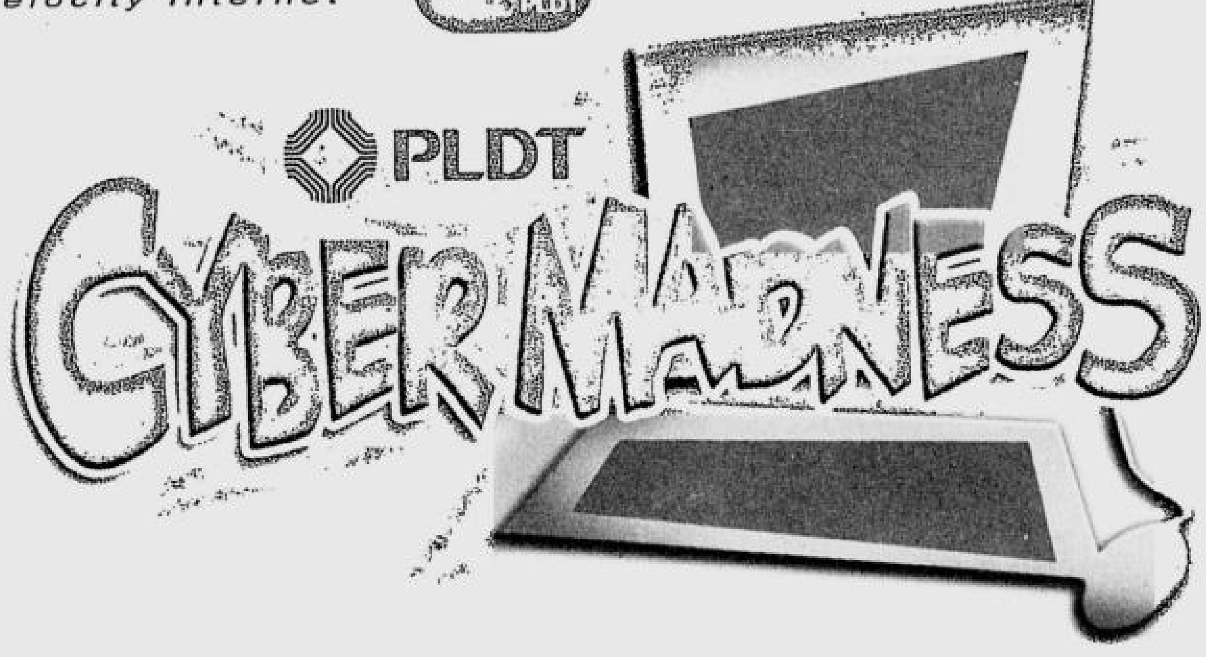

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CABALEN Morcon

Secret seasonings now available

CABALEN Restaurant has opened a corner called Pinoy Deli in its outlets.

The deli will be welcomed by people who love the secret seasonings of Cabalen's popular dishes. The seasonings are sold in bottles. Also available at the deli are native chocolate, *burong isda* and canned *taba ng talangka*.

Cabalen Deli also offers kakanin like *tibok-tibok, tibok mais, maja kalabasa, leche flan, ube halaya,* and cassava cake. It also sells *pasalubong* items like peanut brittle and fruit preserves from

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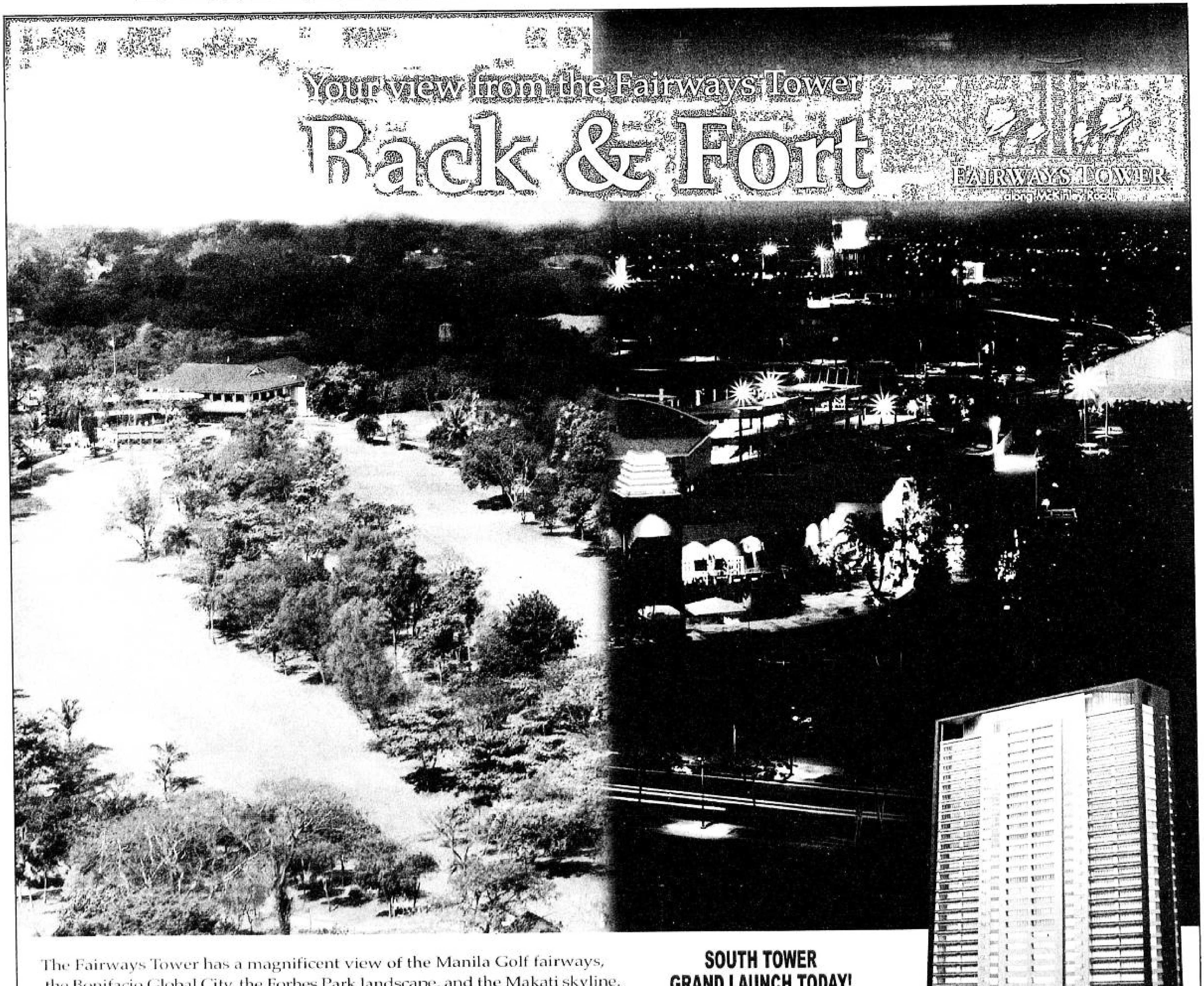

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Noodles without red sauce, for a change

Try this creamy Italian pasta spirals with broccoli and red pepper that's easy to cook and very kid-friendly

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

ARE you looking for something different, healthy, and good for your kids? Then try this creamy Italian pasta spirals with broccoli and red pepper that can also be done in a jiffy.

"This pasta is also a good trick to get your kids to eat vegetables," says Melisa Tabuñar Infante, a homemaker and a mother of two.

"Most of our children like eating spaghetti with tomato sauce because it's what they see and taste all the time. But it's also nice to serve pasta in different shapes and sauces. As they say, the more creative the meal is, the greater the variety of food kids will eat and enjoy."

This recipe, specially concocted by Infante, brings together the taste of broccoli, oregano, garlic and bell pepper in one kid-friendly pasta dish.

The broccoli and red pepper are combined with cheese and cream. You can also add whatever veggies you prefer. Carrots, asparagus, zucchini, mushrooms, spinach or peas would be wonderful additions to the dish.

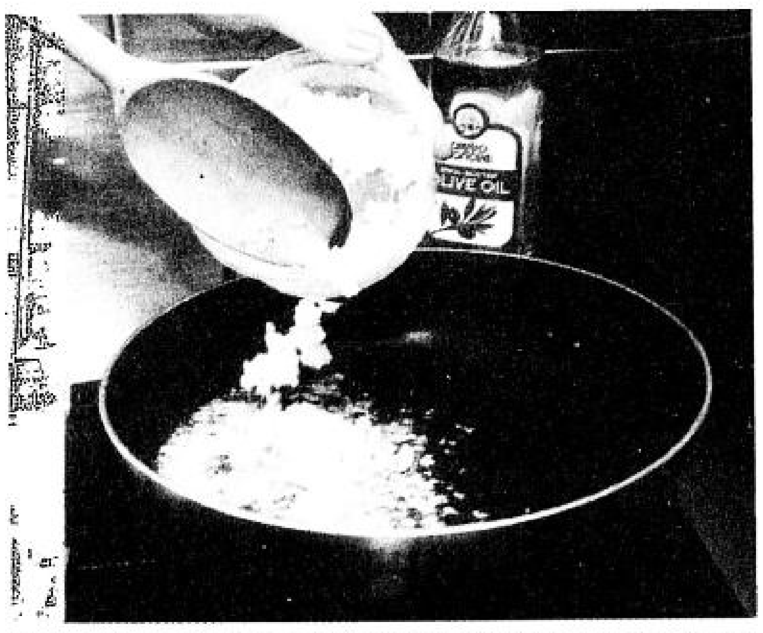
To entice your kids more, add slivers of chicken breast or tuna flakes. And to make the dish even more heart-friendly without cutting out flavor, use olive or canola oil.

This vegetable pasta, best served with crusty bread, is easy to cook and will likely please even the pickiest vegetable eaters.

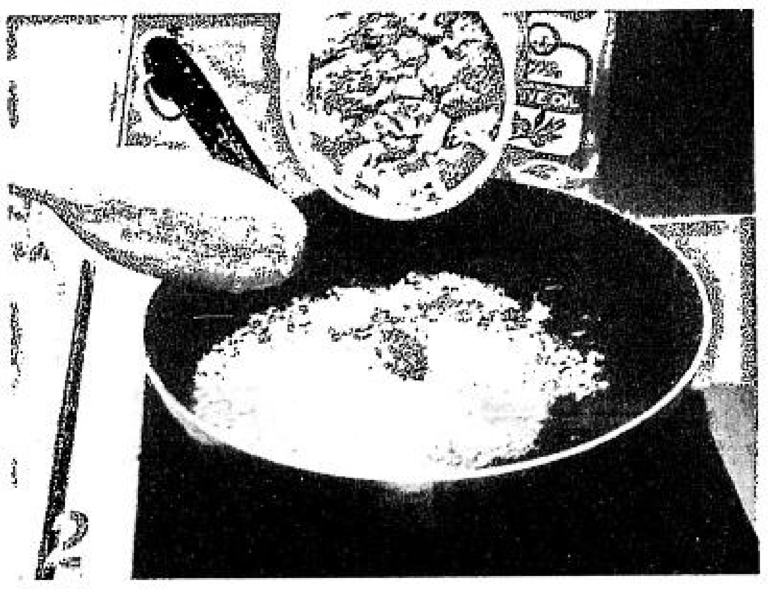
Ingredients:
6 cloves garlic, chopped
1 onion, chopped
2 stalks broccoli, cut into bite-size pieces
1 large bell pepper, diced
4 tbsp Pietro Coricelli 100 percent Pure Olive Oil
1 tsp oregano
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp chili pepper (optional)
¼ tsp black pepper
½ c all purpose cream
¾ c Parmesan cheese
350g Federici Pasta #42 Fusilli (Italian Pasta Spirals)

For suggestions, e-mail author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

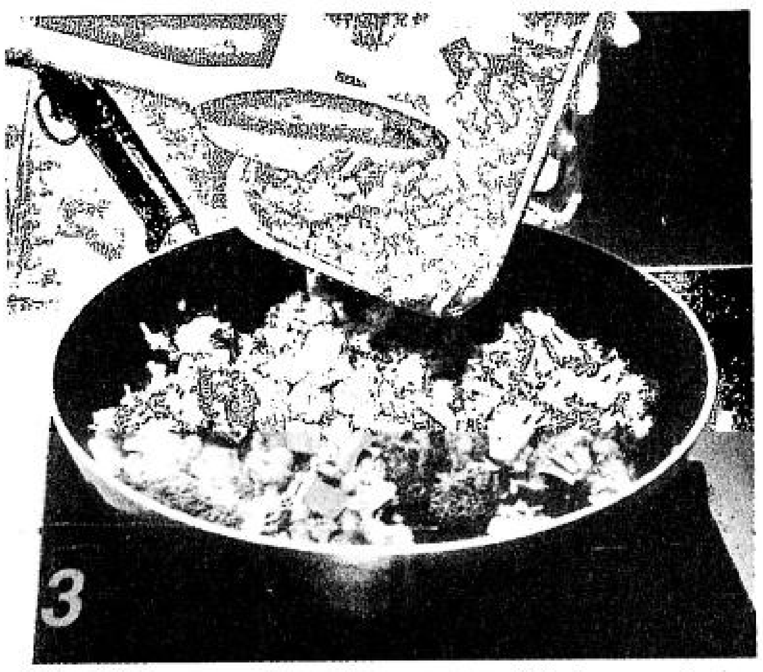
STEP BY STEP



BOIL pasta according to package instruction. Set aside. Pour olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté garlic and onion. Lower fire and cook until onion is translucent.

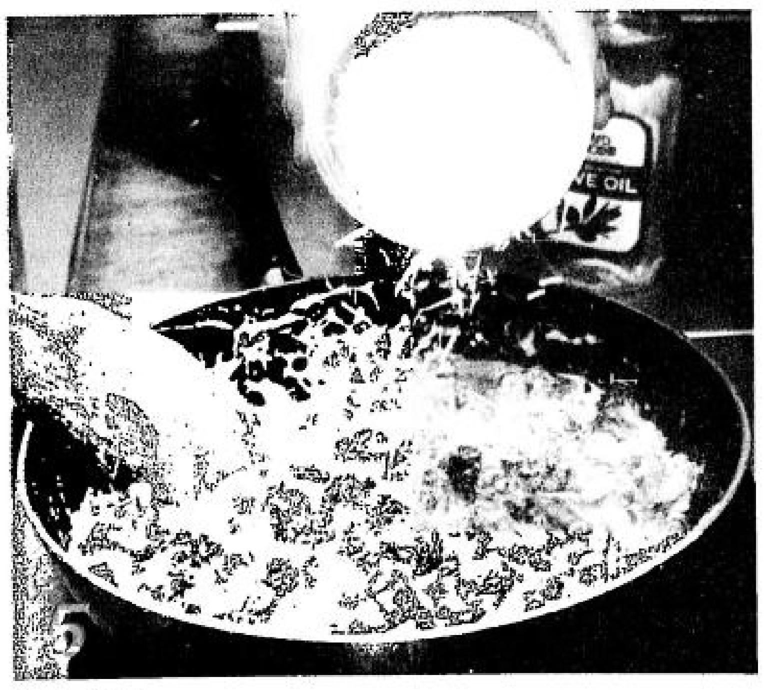


ADD broccoli.

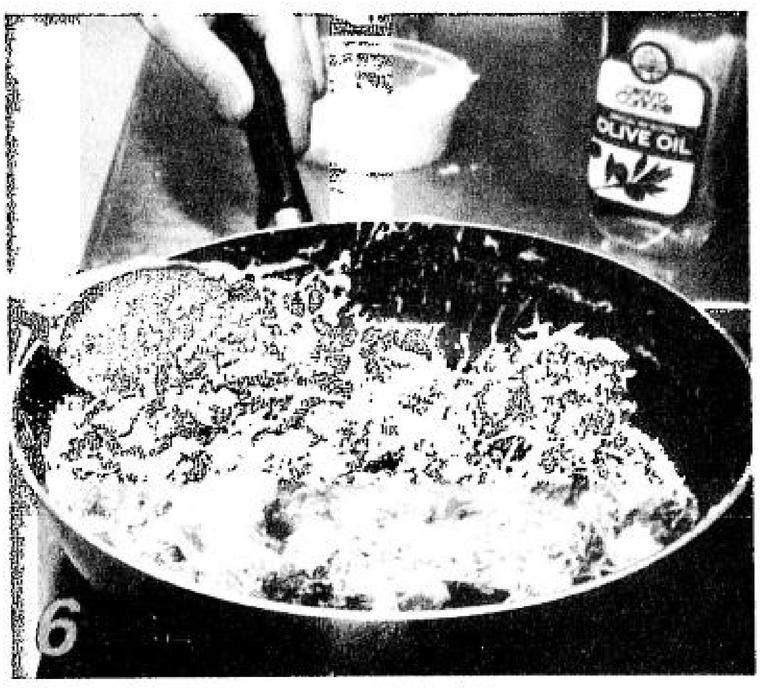


ADD red pepper, oregano, chili pepper, salt and black pepper. Cook until vegetables are crisp.

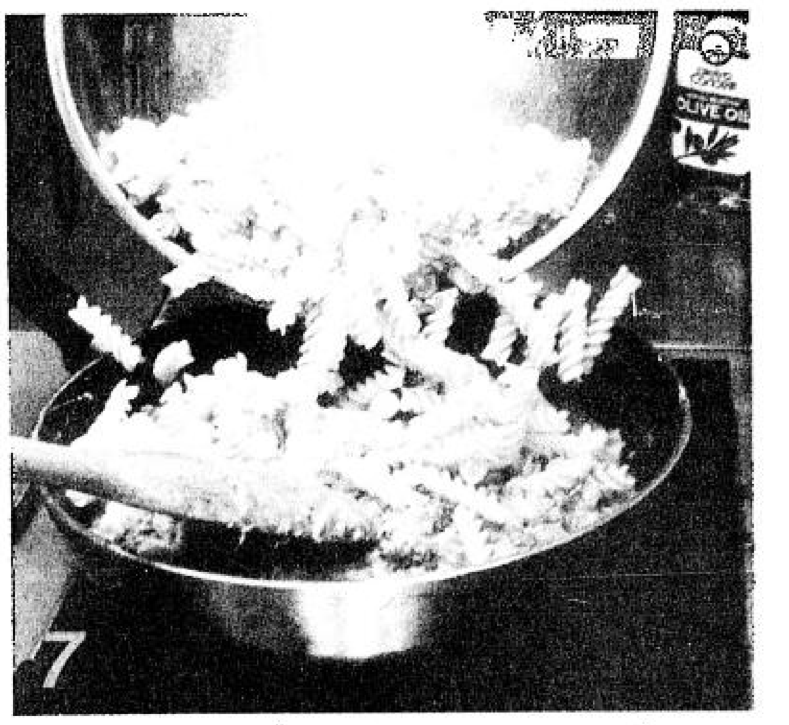
POUR in all-purpose cream.



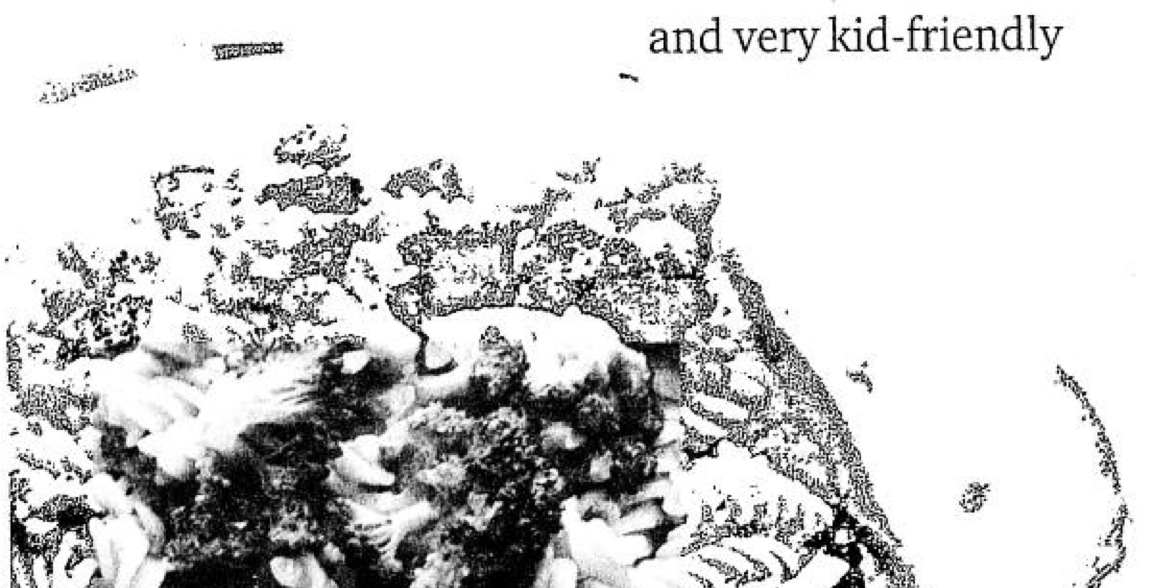
ADD cheese.



STIR well and cook until mixture slightly thickens.

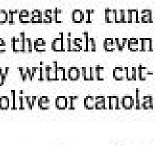


ADD fusilli pasta to vegetable mixture and toss. Serve immediately.



ITALIAN Pasta Spirals with Broccoli and Red Pepper

'Fine print' in contract puts cell-phone user in a bind



THE CONSUMER
Marietta Velasco Giron

A DISGRUNTLED subscriber is appealing to the National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) to improve cellular phone services in the country. Ray Ong is asking the NTC to set standards for the mobile phone industry, specifically promos, so-called special deals, billings, service coverage, phone locking, etc. He also wants the agency to take steps to prevent cell phone scams.

Lured by an attractive package deal from a cell-phone company, Ong subscribed to a 24-month plan that included, among others, e-mail, Internet, different portals, a camera attachment and roaming service. It was a disappointment, however. His gripes included the inability to make calls when he used the phone abroad, delayed billing, locked phone without prior notice, and a fixed P1,335 monthly fee whether or not he uses the phone.

"The company locks your phone without notice if you don't pay your bill right away. I don't mind paying the penalty, but getting the phone unlocked is a big hassle. That's not all. When I requested for a termination of the service, I was told that I was bound by a 24-month contract and to get out of it, I had to pay P10,000!"

Checkup for househelp

You could endanger the health of your family when you hire the services of household help from agencies, warned Dr. M. Ascalon (docmela@yahoo.com). The caregiver she hired for her two-month-old daughter arrived with a bad cough and slightly yellowish skin. She also complained of frequent dizziness.

Being a doctor, she urged her husband to have the maid undergo a medical checkup. She was found positive for hepatitis.

She wrote, "We notified the agency about the health problem of the caregiver and asked for a refund of the fee we paid. [But] the agency said it would send a replacement. To my dismay, the agency refused medical checkup for the replacement, making it clear that it should be [up to the] employers [to have the help checked up]."

We agree with Dr. Ascalon. A clean bill of health should be mandatory for all household help, particularly caregivers of children.

Unnecessary circumcision

Our apologies to Dr. Reynaldo O. Joson, chair of the department of surgery, Ospital ng Maynila Medical Center. This important information should have been published last summer.

He wrote that, based on research findings and statements of medical institutions indicating that routine circumcision has no medical benefits, the Ospital ng Maynila has stopped doing it (including the summer operation *tule*). He cited findings of the American Academy of Pediatrics in 1999 and statements of the Philippine Society of General Surgeons, Phil. Urology Association, Phil. Society of Pediatric Surgeons, and Perinatal Center of the Phil. Children Medical Center.

"Despite these research findings, many medical institutions, clinics and physicians still do routine circumcision. They publish big advertisements using the rite-of-passage hype as a selling point. The truth is, routine circumcision has no medical benefits, and thus young boys need not suffer the unnecessary pain, expense and related health risks."

For more information, write to Dr. Joson at rjoson2001@yahoo.com or visit http://xtulepinoy.tripod.com and http://urbanrebel.com

No more toll-free calls?

ABS-CBN anchor Gene Orejana said Citibank had its toll-free telephone numbers disconnected. "It's a great disservice to clients who are abroad and would want to check their balance." He also mentioned that Visa card holders asking for credit limit upgrades were being required by the bank to submit a copy of their Income Tax Returns to support the request. The policy applies even to cardholders of good credit standing. He's been a cardholder for nine years.

Here's an explanation from Citibank: "Toll-free numbers or collect calls (632-995-9999) from abroad are allowed only for reports on lost or stolen cards. However, queries about bills and other matters can be sent via Internet at www.citibank.com.ph." Citibank has yet to explain to Orejana its upgrade requirements.

'Showdown' in Davao

A three-day culinary event billed "Culinary Showdown sa Dabaw" will be held at the atrium of Gaisano Mall in Davao City, Aug. 22-24.

Culinary competitions include "Two-on-Two Beat the Clock Cooking Contest" (organized by San Miguel-Purefoods Corporation) and "Best Original Century Tuna Salad Competition" (Century Tuna Corporation).

Tefal Cookware will sponsor a product/cooking demonstration featuring chef Honey Vargas of the World Culinary Training Center. Organizer of the cookfest is STRAM Inc., a member company of the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Call 927-7208 or 927-6206.

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph or lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

CABALEN Taba ng Talangka, Burong Hipon, Ginisang Bagoong Regular, Ginisang Bagoong Spicy, Ginisang Bagoong Sweet and Sweet Chili Sauce

CATERING by Cabalen

Secret seasonings now available

From page D1

Baguio, fruit candies and *barquillos* from Davao, *broas* and dried mangoes from Cebu, sweet *pili* from Bicol, candied *sampaloc* from Bulacan, and crunchy *chicharon* from Pampanga. Other items are easy-to-cook products like *morcon, rellenong bangus, longganisa, embotido, tocino*, and *tapang kalabaw*.

Until Aug. 30, Cabalen offers a “Buy 2-take 1” deal. For every purchase of two trays of *tibok-tibok*, customers will get one free bottle of *bagoong*.

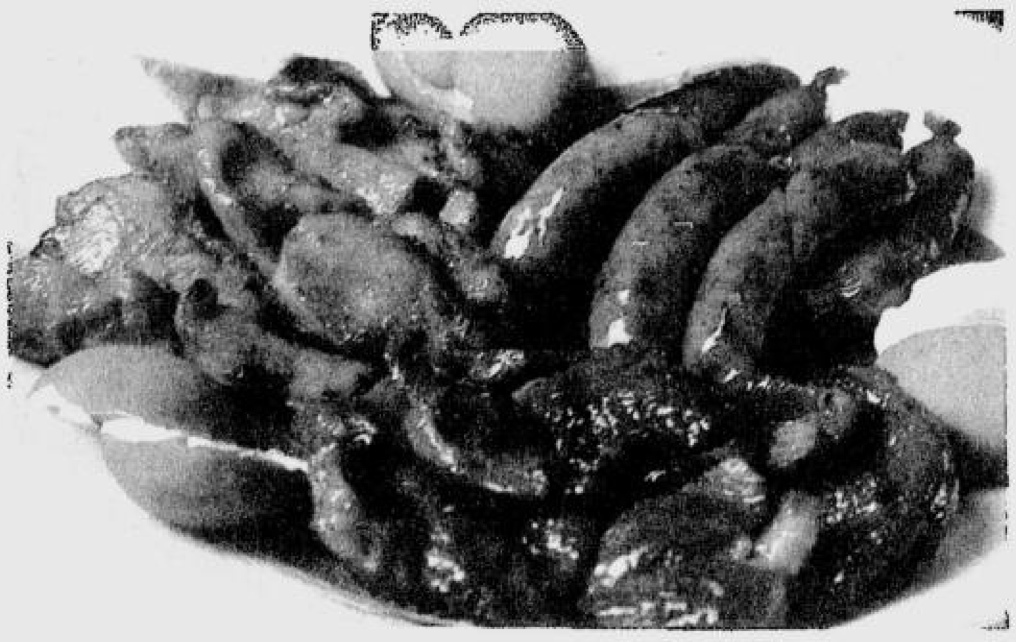
Cabalen Deli corners are at Cabalen Restaurants on West Avenue, Quezon City; Katipunan Avenue, Blue Ridge, QC; 4th level SM Megamall Bldg. B; Glorietta III Ayala Center, Makati City; 2/F Robinson's Place Manila, Ermita; SM City North Edsa, QC; Starmills Gate, Robinsons Starmills Pampanga; SM City Mall, San Marcelino, Manila; Brick Road Area, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Cainta, Rizal; and Harrison Village Square, Manila.

Meanwhile, Cabalen offers its catering services for special occasions. Maritel Nievera- Shani, Cabalen president, says the restaurant offers varied menus ranging from authentic Kapampangan to regional selections and international dishes.

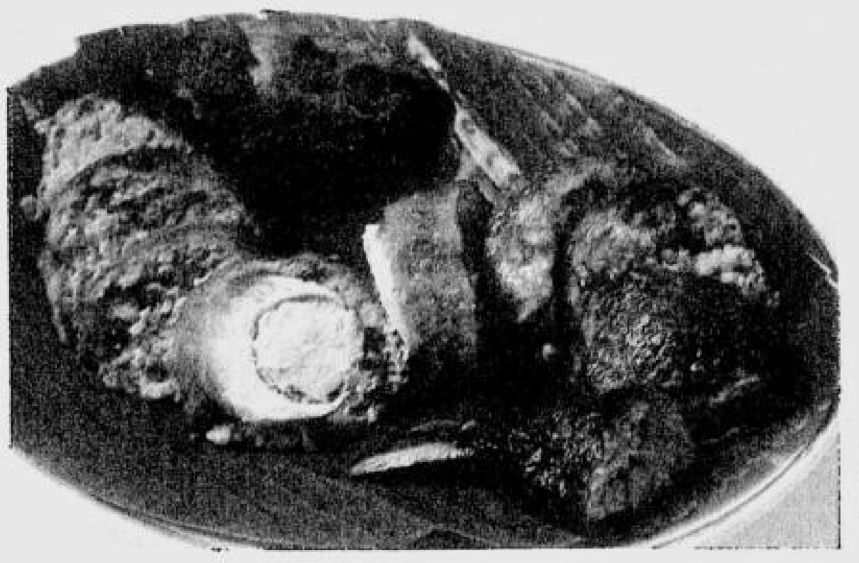
Nievera-Shani adds that Cabalen gives personalized and professional services at a package most favorable to the client. Prices are always adjusted to the client's budget and location is never a problem.

Cabalen offers services for *merienda cena*, conferences, seminars, packed meals, debuts, weddings, baptisms, birthdays, children's parties and other special occasions.

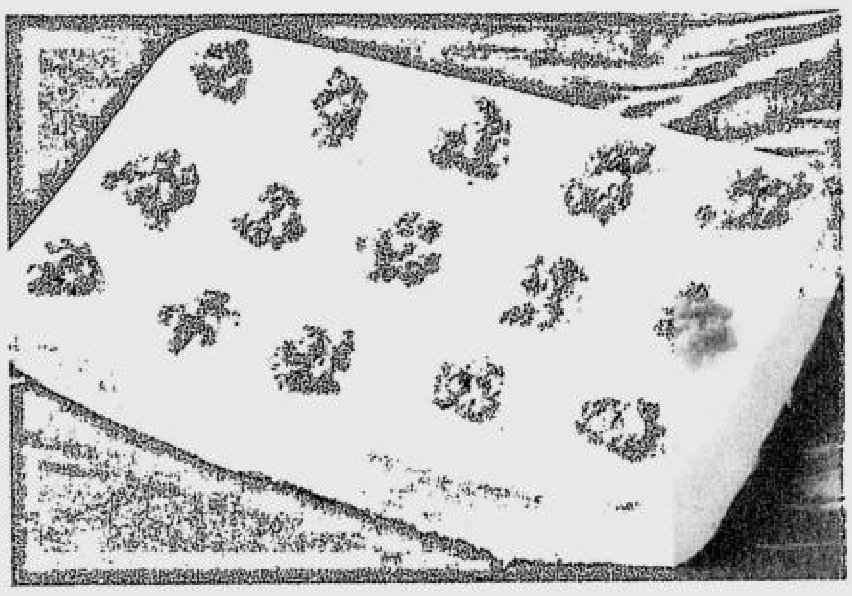
Call 421-9220 or 9135522 or visit the website at www.cabalen.com.ph



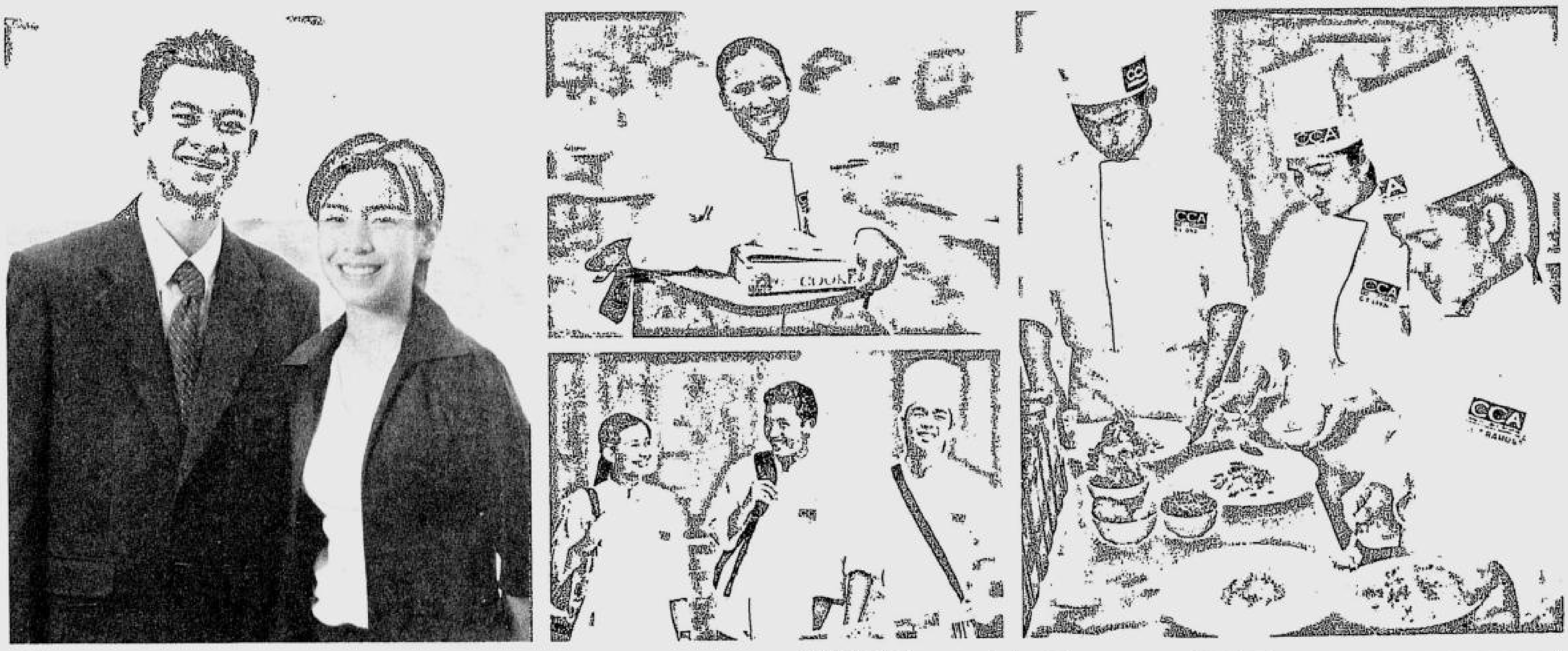
CABALEN Longanisa, Tocino and Tapa



CABALEN Rellenong Bangus



CABALEN Tibok-tibok



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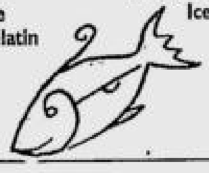
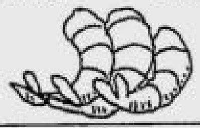
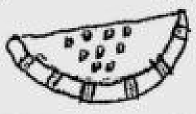
Cooking with herbs

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	Hotcake with butter and maple syrup Pan-grilled spam Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Chicken *tinola* with young corn and *malunggay* leaves Pandan rice *Minatamis na saba* with *sago*	Fried fish with sweet and sour sauce Vegetable chopsuey Rice Chilled chico
TUESDAY	Oatmeal Assorted bread from the bakery Fruit jam and butter Coffee or hot chocolate Fresh pineapple	Monggo soup Pork steak with onion rings Rice Fruit gelatin	Clear soup Pancit sotanghon Pan-grilled maya-maya Ice cream
WEDNESDAY	Garlic rice Chicken *tocino* Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Instant cream of mushroom soup Pandan lemon chicken Boiled and buttered fresh asparagus Canned fruit cocktail	*Paksiw na isda* Pinakbet Rice Mais con hielo
THURSDAY	Corned beef omelet Pan de sal Coffee or hot chocolate Slices of fresh orange	Sinigang na hipon Thai basil beef Rice Canned lychee	Tossed green salad with thousand island dressing Spaghetti carbonara Garlic bread Store-bought chocolate cake
FRIDAY	Cereal and milk Bread Butter and fruit jam Crispy bacon Coffee, hot chocolate or iced tea	Clear soup Fried chicken Russian salad Fruit salad	*Pesang isda* with *pechay* Breaded porkchop Rice Watermelon
SATURDAY	Leftover fried rice Coffee or hot chocolate Papaya with *calamansi*	Pork *embotido* *Lumpiang ubod* Rice Pandan leche flan	Pancit molo soup Roast beef Rice Fresh fruit platter
SUNDAY	Lugaw Fried *adobo* flakes Bottled gourmet *tuyo* Coffee, Chinese tea or fruit juice	Instant crab and corn soup Lumpiang shanghai Pancit canton Almond lychee gelatin	*Sinampalukang manok* Beef *tapa* Rice Crema de fruta







By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

THANKS to the good weather in Tagaytay, homemakers need not depend on bottled herbs anymore.

Fresh herbs such as sweet basil, *pandan* (also known as screwpine leaves) and rosemary are widely available in big groceries, delis and wet markets such as Farmer's Market in Cubao.

Fresh herbs, when added to a dish, provide interesting flavors that will surely perk up our taste buds.

Take the Thai Basil Beef as an example. Without the fresh basil, the recipe is a basic beef steak bathed in an oriental marinade. The fried basil leaves give the dish its crowning glory.

The simple-looking *pandan* is a favorite in our kitchen. Although it is widely used to perfume rice in the rice cooker, here we showcase its versatility. We have *leche flan* perfumed and flavored with *pandan*, and a roast chicken bursting with the bright flavors of lemon and *pandan*.

So, when fresh herbs are abundant, use them. The possibilities are almost endless—in viands, in desserts and as part of your salad. Who knows, you might even be able to concoct a special herbal tea!

From my kitchen to yours...

Thai Basil Beef

2 tbsp corn oil
1 tbsp well-pounded garlic
½ kg beef tenderloin or sirloin, sliced into strips
½ c shredded fresh basil leaves
½ c spring onions, sliced into 1½ inch pieces
¼ c sliced coriander (*wansoy*)
1½ tbsp fish sauce (*patis*)
2 tsp white sugar
freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 tsp bottled chili garlic sauce
2 tbsp cornstarch dispersed in
¼ c water

Topping:
¼ c corn oil
½ c fresh basil leaves

Heat the oil in a wok. Sauté the garlic in the oil until fragrant but not brown. Quickly add the beef strips and continue to sauté only until the beef changes color.

Add the rest of the ingredients and continue to cook only until the sauce becomes quite thick. Turn off the heat and transfer to a serving platter. Top with fried basil leaves.

For the topping, heat the corn oil in a frying pan. As soon as the oil is hot enough, quickly fry the leaves until they become crisp. Drain and sprinkle over the cooked beef.

Pandan Leche Flan

Caramel glaze:
1 c white sugar
¼ c water
pinch of cream of tartar

> Fresh herbs, when added to a dish, provide interesting flavors that will surely perk up our taste buds

Flan:
2 c pure evaporated milk
6 pcs *pandan*
1 c white sugar
6 egg yolks + 1 whole egg

In a heavy saucepan, combine the following ingredients—evaporated milk, *pandan* and white sugar. Place over medium heat and allow to boil only until the sugar has dissolved completely. Allow to cool with the *pandan* in the refrigerator until the liquid is cool to touch. Discard the *pandan* leaves.

Beat the eggs until blended in a mixing bowl. Add the *pandan*-milk mixture and mix until well incorporated. Strain and set aside.

To prepare the glaze, pour sugar, water and cream of tartar in a thick frying pan. Place over low heat and allow to boil. As soon as the color turns light golden brown, divide the mixture equally among the leche flan molders (2 oval *llaneras*). Using hand towels, immediately tilt and rotate each molder, making sure that the caramel has completely covered the bottom.

Set the caramel-lined molders in a bigger pan with water. Divide the flan mixture equally among the prepared molders. Bake at 350° F for 45 minutes to an hour, or until a toothpick inserted in the center of the flan comes out clean. If desired, steam for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool thoroughly before unmolding. Overnight chilling is highly recommended.

Pandan Lemon Chicken

1 whole chicken at least 1.2 kg
freshly ground black pepper to taste
rock salt to taste
1 American lemon
6 pcs *pandan* leaves
¼ c garlic-flavored margarine

Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Slice the lemon into quarters and stuff into the cavity of the chicken. Tear the *pandan* leaves and tie into a knot. Likewise stuff into the chicken.

Massage the skin of the chicken with garlic-flavored margarine. Roast in a turbo broiler for 45 minutes or until done.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City. Call 721-7735.

Fast-food business courses

LOOKING for more profitable ways to augment the family's income? Maya Kitchen offers courses on Pinoy Fast-food business for *carinderia, pondohan, lugawan* and other food-related businesses this month. Aside from your fast-food stall, you can also offer food delivery service to offices and other business establishments nearby.

So enroll now for Pinoy Fast-food's (Carinderia, Pondohan, Lugawan, etc.) One Day Specials course on July 26, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Learn the technical and operational aspects of the business, hygiene, sanitation and safety, costing and actual cooking demonstration of popular low-cost fast-food recipes such as different kinds of Lomi, Pork Asado, Fresh and Fried Lumpia, Pancit Malabon, Adobong Pusit, and different kinds of barbecue. Included topics are cycle menu sampler, use of extenders, etc.

Also on the same date is Quick and Easy Gulaman, 2-5 p.m. Know how to make Cathedral Window, Buko Pandan Salad, Molded Fresh Desserts, Chewy Fruity Salad, Icebox Cake, plus a special bonus on how to make an edible centerpiece.

Also offered are certificate courses with hands-on for adults, with pre-registration requirement such as Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks on July 22-25, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The course includes: food hygiene and sanitation, standard techniques of preparing basic stocks soups and sauces applicable to 1,001 recipes, salads and dressing, main dishes, potato cookery, pasta and rice, techniques of deboning and filleting fish and chicken, use of herbs and spices to cooking, basic garnish for plate and platter presentation. Free lunch will be served during this course.

Enroll also in Cooking I on the same date but at a later time, 1:30-5 p.m., designed for Messmen, Stewards and Beginners. This course covers basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes, techniques of deboning chicken and fish, basic garnishing, actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes.

Baking I (Basic) will be on July 31 and Aug. 1, 1:30-5 p.m. Techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more will be taught in this course.

Visit Maya Kitchen at the 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City, call 892-1185/5011 local 108 or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph

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Iberian flavors in Pinoy sites

THE CLUBHOUSE of Peninsula de Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas, echoed with the strains of Spanish music to signal the start of "Flavors of Spain," a Spanish food festival to celebrate the new partnership of Landco Pacific Corporation and Roxaco Land Corporation with FilBarcelo Hotels and Properties Management Corporation.

The event also marks the assumption of the management of Club Punta Fuego by FilBarcelo. It is a partnership that is expected to elevate service excellence at Club Punta Fuego to the international quality standards of the Barcelo Group.

FilBarcelo is the licensed Philippine company of the international chain Barcelo Hotels and Resorts.

"Flavors. of Spain: Spanish Gourmet Food Presentation," which showcased the various flavors that Spanish gastronomy has to offer, was done in collaboration with the Spanish Commercial Office (ICEX) of the Embassy of Spain.

Club Punta Fuego members and their guests were treated to an array of Spanish favorites such as boquerones, croquetas, tortilla, sobrasada, paella, sopas de lentejas and many more that have become an integral part of Philippine culinary history.

There were also fine Spanish wines to complement the excellent cuisine.

"Punta Fuego is a world-class property, and the members of Club Punta Fuego can expect service that conforms with the best international standards," said Ignacio Gandarias, general manager of Club Punta Fuego and former assistant GM of Barcelo Pearl Farm Island Hotel in Samal Island, Davao.

FilBarcelo also manages the Taal Vista Lodge in Tagaytay, Barcelo Pearl Farm Island Hotel in Davao, Barcelo Sarabia Manor Hotel in Iloilo, Barcelo Asturias Hotel in Puerto Princesa, and Barcelo Eagle Point Hotel in Anilao, Batangas.

Lapu-Lapu Con Salsa Verde

4 x 1" *lapu-lapu* fillet
salt and pepper
flour for dusting
4 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp lemon juice
4 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tbsp finely chopped onion
1 hard-boiled egg, chopped finely
2 tbsp flour
¾ c white wine
¾ c fish stock
6 tbsp minced parsley
¾ c peas, fresh or frozen
12 small clams
12 small mussels

Season the fish, then dust with flour. Heat 2 tbsp oil in a large skillet and fry the steaks briefly for about one minute on each side. Put steaks in an oven-proof dish (or 4 individual dishes) and sprinkle with the lemon juice. Wipe the skillet. Heat the remaining oil in the skillet and sauté the garlic and onion until the onion has wilted. Stir in the 2 tbsp flour then gradually add the wine and stock. Stir until thickened and smooth. Add 5 tbsp parsley, peas, salt and pepper then pour over the fish steaks. Put the clams and mussels around the fish. Put in a preheated 180°C oven and bake for about 20 minutes until the fish is cooked and the shellfish has opened.

Sprinkle with the remaining tbsp parsley and hard-boiled egg.

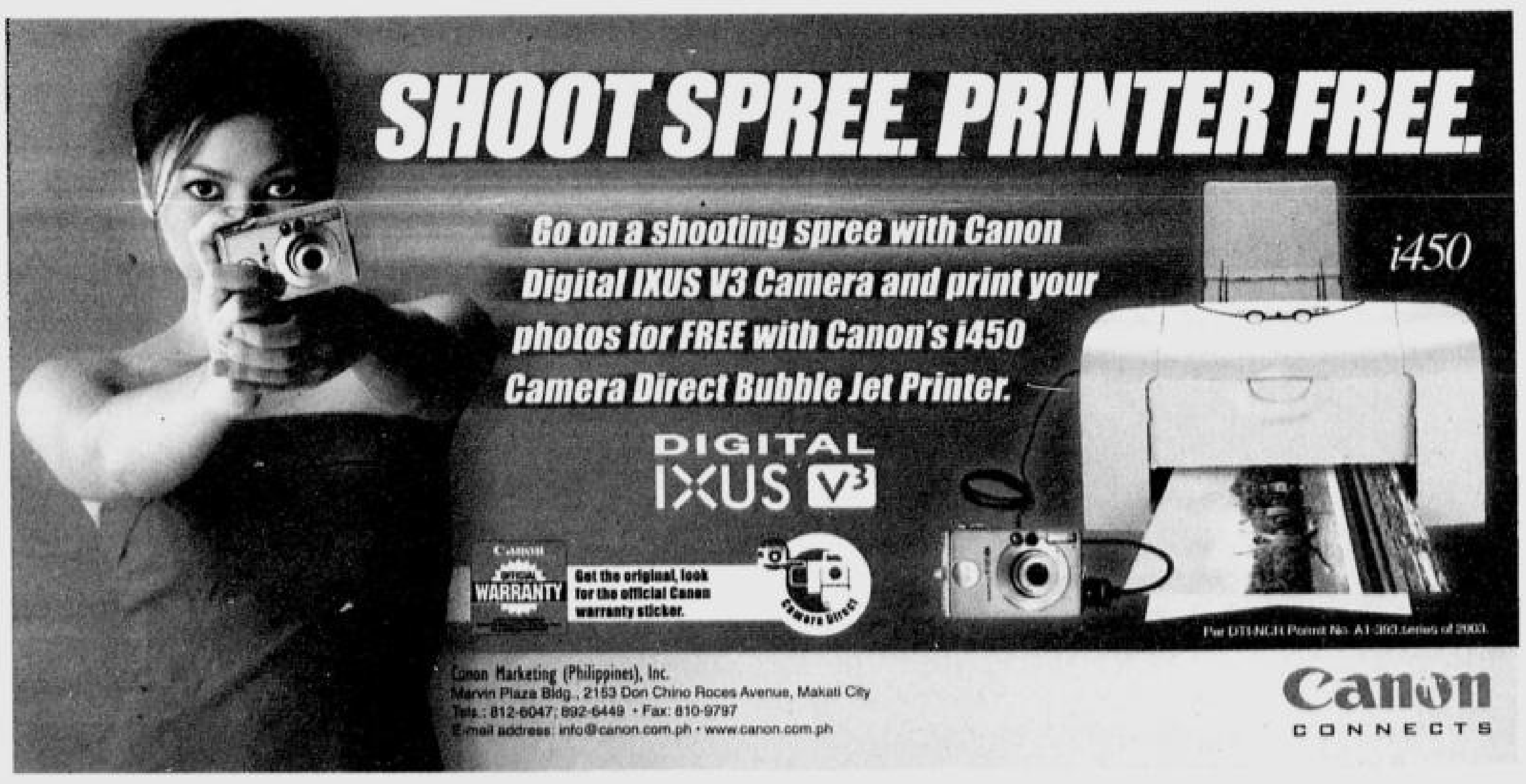
Paella Valenciana

1 c olive oil
4 pcs of chicken
¼ of pound shrimp
½ of pound mussels or clamps
1 or 2 legs of crab
½ of pound white fish (any kind)
1 can (small) peas
1 can Lima beans
1 can Italian Beans
½ can diced tomatoes
1 small spoon saffron (Asafran)
1 pound of Spanish rice
1 lemon
fresh rosemary
60 g chopped onions and 60 g bell pepper (boiled together in olive oil until cooked)
salt

Put the olive oil in the paella pan and heat. Fry the chicken and the tomato sauce at the same time, during several minutes; the meat has to be well done. Add a little salt. At the same time cut the white fish in small pieces, and when the meat is almost ready, add the fish and fry it, too.

When the meat and fish are well-done, add the vegetables and shrimp, move a couple of times, and after 1 minute, add water and saffron, (fill the paella pan completely). You have to boil everything with high fire for 20-30 minutes. It is very important that you taste how salty the water is. Then add crab legs, mussels and clamps. After 20 or 30 minutes, add the rice. There is a very special form to do it. You have to make a mountain that is going to cross the paella pan, drawing a diameter. The mountain must be over the water by an inch. With the technique, you can know how much rice you need. Spread the mountain over the whole paella. Add water until you you reach the handles. Don't put more water. Lower the fire. Add the rosemary in the middle of the paella for a nice garnish. The rice has to cook in 20 minutes. Cut the lemon in 4 pieces and serve the rice with lemon. Before eating, squeeze the lemon.

PAELLA Valenciana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